

Braille Monitor



SEPTEMBER, 1975

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

A Publication of the
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
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THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION
SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES.

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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* * *

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"I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, a District of Columbia nonprofit corporation, the sum of \$___ (or, "___percent of my net estate", or "the following stocks and bonds: ___") to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons."

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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CONVENTION ROUNDUP

Fifty states and the District of Columbia answered the roll call at the 1975 Convention of the National Federation of the Blind—a first for any organization of the blind. This fact, and the presence of more than 2,300 people—delegates, families, friends—made this the largest Convention in the history of the NFB. The number of Federal and state officials in attendance underlined the theme of this Convention, “The Blind: An Emerging Minority.” There was no doubt in anyone’s mind that the NFB had fully emerged as a force to be reckoned with where decisions about blind people are concerned by Convention’s end.

Program items were enlightening and provocative. Debate, limited at times by time constrictions, continued after sessions. The press coverage in all media was outstanding and the number of media reporters unusual. Some, who had had no previous contact with the blind, found that their preconceived notions did not apply, and said so. The Chicago area was treated to many appearances on radio and television of Federationists from our President on down the line, before, during, and after the Convention.

Federationists began gathering at the Palmer House in Chicago, as usual, midweek before the official opening. By now, the third time around in the same place, most knew the town well and had come to enjoy its many attractions before settling down to business. The charm of greeting old friends and making new ones seems to strengthen each year, all of which added to the gaiety in the Red Lacquer Room each evening, the crowded hospitality suite manned by the host affiliates, and the overflow crowds in the Presidential headquarters

in the Penthouse. There was a good deal of socializing in the large and always crowded Exhibit Hall.

Each year the feeling grows that the Convention is more like a gathering of the clans than anything else. Honeymooners abound, anniversaries are marked, and the birth of babies celebrated. Jerry and Alice Preston Drake of California were among the honeymoon crowd. John and Agnes Lemaire of Louisiana were congratulated on their 24th wedding anniversary. Arlene and Jim Gashel shared the joy of the birth of their daughter, born June 27, with the whole Convention.

If it seemed to newcomers that all our sessions opened with peculiarly apt invocations, it may be because they were delivered by fervent Federationists, all ordained ministers or missionaries. Don Capps, who served as both Chairman and “soul” member of the Invocation Committee, did his usual fine job. Harold Bradley, member of the Chicago Chapter and a student at McCormick Seminary, Father Tim Kremen of Detroit, Reverend Walter Woitesek of Brockton, Massachusetts, Reverend Hershell Moore of Arkansas, opened our morning sessions; and the Reverend Howard May, president of our Connecticut affiliate, gave the invocation at the banquet.

Religious devotions were held each morning, as is our custom. On Tuesday and Wednesday mornings, our President led us all in silent prayer and remembrance for those who had died since our last convening.

The Sunday afternoon meeting of the Resolutions Committee was so well attended that an adjoining room was opened to accommodate the crowd. A good public address system enabled all to participate. An-

other well-attended meeting was that of the White Cane and Fundraising Committee on Sunday evening. But the major attraction on Sunday, from 4:00 until 8:00 in the evening, was the CEIP wine and cheese tasting party at which a variety of wines and cheeses, in small amounts, was offered to each ticket holder. The event added upward of \$2,000 to the work of our Cultural Exchange International Program.

Executive Committee

Since all our meetings are open, with the exception of the Nominations Committee, the Executive Committee session, called to order at 10 a.m. on Monday, June 30, was attended by over 500 people.

Notable actions taken at this meeting were the approval for admission to the National Federation of the Blind of affiliates in Vermont, Wisconsin, and North Dakota, to make a full house of states represented in the NFB. It was with sadness that we heard Shirley Lebowitz announce that she would not stand for reelection to the Executive Committee because of poor health. It was with regret that we heard Kenneth Hopkins say that the burdens of his new position as administrator of programs for the blind in the State of Washington made it advisable for him not to continue to serve. There is no doubt that both will continue to serve the movement as their energies and time permit.

Perry Sundquist nominated, in his own gracious manner, Dr. Isabelle Grant, Dr. Jacob Freid, and the president of the NFB Student Division, Marc Maurer, to serve in an advisory capacity on the NFB Board of Directors. The nominations were approved. It was noted that two board members were absent: Dr. Freid had been called back to New York because of serious illness in his family; and Dr. Grant was attending the Women's Year conference in Mexico City.

Monday afternoon was given over to meetings of the NFB Divisions and some special committees. They were well attended, had interesting agendas and, in most, very lively discussion. We hope that there will be reports in forthcoming issues of the MONITOR. The following Divisions met:

National Federation of the Blind in Computer Science, Curtis Willoughby, president

National Association of Blind Secretaries and Transcribers, Anita O'Shea, president

Teachers Division, Robert Acosta, president

Blind Merchants Division, Jim Ryan, president

Blind Lawyers Division, James Lewis, chairman

Student Division, Marc Maurer, president

Sheltered Shop Employees Division, Ysidro Urena, president.

Tuesday, July 1, 1975

The gavel came down sharply and President Jernigan said: "The 1975 Convention is in order." It immediately went out of order. The chandeliers of the Grand Ballroom in the Palmer House vibrated as the uproarious, joyous clamor set up by the more than 2,300 people present bounced off the walls.

The President announced, after the invocation, that there were eight guests from foreign countries. The Convention was officially welcomed by the host affiliates—Sylvester Nemmers for Iowa, Joyce Scanlan and Karl Kuhl for the Minnesota organizations.

Dr. Dennis Wyant, now an Executive Staff member on the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped and formerly a leader in the BVA, brought greetings from both organizations. Among other things he said that he had been work-

ing closely with the National Federation of the Blind especially since Jim Gashel arrived in the District of Columbia. The BVA, he said, is very appreciative of the articulation and determination of the National Federation of the Blind and realized by its size and its spokesmen across the United States, it is benefiting individuals from one end of our land to the other. He noted that Buddy Spivey, Field Representative of BVA, is an active member of our Arkansas affiliate. Robert Utley, Field Representative for the Western United States, and a member of the NFB of California, was also present. All were given a warm welcome by the Convention.

Once again, the assemblage set up a tumultuous sound when the President started the roll call and pronounced "Alabama." There is a fallout of tidbits of information as state representatives rise to answer the call of the states. All three members of the Iowa Commission for the Blind were present, with spouses: Wayne and Nell Bonnell, Elwyn and Dorothy Hemken, and Dan and Sally Frudden. Norman Gardner, president of the Idaho affiliate, has been appointed to the Board of the Idaho Commission for the Blind. Harold Reagan of Kentucky is attending his 29th consecutive Convention. Louisiana's Legislature passed a White Cane law as a result of Dr. Jernigan's appearance two days earlier on the "Tomorrow Show." Massachusetts now has 15 chapters, New York 12, and California 52. Everyone waited in anticipation for the deep rumble of John McCraw's voice when Maryland was called. And, of course, there was a warm, long, standing ovation for our President when Iowa announced its delegation. This list should be longer but a taste of the tidbits only whets the appetite for the more substantial offering of the agenda to come.

The Presidential Report, reprinted in full

elsewhere in this issue, reviewed the activities of the organization since 1974, including finances, our struggle with NAC, the new cases of discrimination, our new affiliates, and concluded that this has been the best year in our history.

Hazel tenBroek, composure again shaken by President Jernigan's kind words and the Convention's warm reception, gave a short report on present activities in the Berkeley Office. To cut down on errors in the mailing list, she suggested that each member take responsibility for informing the Berkeley Office of his name, address, including zip code, and the edition of the *MONITOR* desired. Sample cards were given to each state affiliate in the hope that the affiliate, itself, would print its own supply to give to its members. This would improve accuracy in the mailing list and help the national treasury by cutting down on unnecessary mailing list expenditures. Mrs. tenBroek also urged every state to either start or improve its internal communications. Too many state organizations are still without any means of communicating with members. That means that important issues, if they are acted upon at all, fall the lot of a few and that does not build good programs or active Federationists.

The Convention then viewed and heard the film, "The Blind: An Emerging Minority," about which President Jernigan spoke in his report. This fine film on and about the blind and their own efforts to improve their lives through their own organization should be given wide circulation by our members.

Mr. Cylke, Chief of the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, did devote some time to his assigned topic, "Service and Technology in the Library for the Blind." The dialogue on his relationship to the organization of blind consumers and

what his program is not doing for the blind, considerably extended the time assigned. That dialogue is also set forth in full in this issue.

Wednesday, July 2

Elections were the first order of the day after the opening ceremonies. This was the year for our own brand of by-elections. Four Executive Committee positions were open. Anthony Mannino of California, Chairman of the Nominations Committee, reported on the slate selected: for Position number one, Jonathan May; for Position number two, Sue Ammeter; for Position number three, E. U. Parker; for Position number four, Perry Sundquist.

Positions one and two were contested in lively elections with many nominations from the floor. Positions three and four were elected by acclamation. In the end, the slate brought in by the Nominations Committee was elected. The Executive Committee is thus now composed of the five officers elected last year and Executive Committeepersons Robert Eschbach, Ned Graham, Joyce Scanlan, and Hazel Staley, all also elected in 1974, and those elected this year, Jonathan May, Sue Ammeter, E. U. Parker, and Perry Sundquist.

Shirley Lebowitz and Joyce Scanlan and other members of their teams, joined by representatives of the new affiliates, reported on their successful organizing efforts. Ed Taylor is the enthusiastic president of the NFB of Wisconsin, John Provost, the able president of the NFB of Vermont, and Barbara Ollila is president of the NFB of South Dakota. Since she could not attend this Convention, the organization was well represented by its treasurer, Dan Lauritsen. All gave accounts of how they came to be in the Federation and the organization gave them the ringing welcome which made them feel privileged to be part of the movement.

Loyal Eugene (Gene) Apple, new Executive Director of the American Foundation for the Blind, came to take with us "A Look Ahead." Because of the limited vision from which AFB has always suffered, the look ahead was more a rehearsal of "Christmases past." Perhaps AFB's custodial attitudes were genetically set since it was born of the American Association of Instructors for the Blind (AAIB) and the American Association of Workers for the Blind (AAWB). One could hope that the infusion of a new Gene might change all that. It looks doubtful, however, since Mr. Apple flatly refused to engage in any discussion of NAC. Mr. Apple's paper and his colloquy with Dr. Jernigan appear elsewhere in this issue.

The morning session was closed with an informative and interesting presentation on "Lionism and the Blind" by Edward Lindsey, Past President, Lions International from Tennessee.

It was well that there was a break in the program on Wednesday afternoon. The displays in the Exhibit Hall were crowded; there were meetings which could not be scheduled otherwise; there were tours and shopping; and a few sensible persons slept.

Everyone turned out for the President's Reception and the dance which followed. The crowd was so large that the event was scheduled for the Grand Ballroom. All the NFB Officers, Executive Committeepersons, old and new, spouses, and Staff members were in the receiving line. Everyone was delighted to find that Dr. Andrew Adams was also in the line, beaming as he greeted the steady stream of Federationists who came through for two and a half hours. All joined the throng in the Ballroom and some had enough energy to try their luck on the crowded dance floor drawn by the fine music of Ralph Materie and his orchestra.

Thursday, July 3, 1975

The Resolutions Committee had a very busy time. Chairman Manuel Urena complained that resolutions are coming in too slowly to be given adequate consideration. At this time, the Committee had thirty-nine resolutions. It has been decided that in 1976 resolutions must be submitted in written form at the Sunday afternoon meeting, that there will be a second meeting on Monday evening, and that resolutions will not be accepted after that unless there is an urgent or good reason. Resolutions dealt with at the Convention appear elsewhere in this issue.

The consideration of resolutions was interrupted by the unscheduled appearance of two officers of government. Mr. Steve Teichner brought us words of philosophic encouragement from the Governor of Illinois, Daniel Walker. However, Mr. Teichner's words on behalf of the Governor said all the right things from a politician's view, but, as the colloquy with Dr. Jernigan which followed his remarks indicates, it is not restating our philosophic beliefs which matters but action taken upon them. This is also set out later in this issue.

Congressman George M. O'Brien, who represents the Chicago area in the Congress, was the other visitor. He reminded those present that there was a war in Vietnam in 1776. Congressman O'Brien also reported on the status of our Disability Insurance for the Blind bill. He warned us that to make progress we must keep in touch with our own Congressmen. "Communication is the name of the game. We can't do much alone but together we can do a lot." We would all do well to act upon those wise words.

Manuel Urena, Program Manager for Services to the Blind and Partially Sighted, California Department of Rehabilitation, grappled with the problem of meeting the

special needs of handicapped persons in employment. Who has the responsibility to supply them? Does such action constitute special treatment? There are other issues without answers. This important statement appears in this issue.

Jim Gashel, the victim of earlier interruptions, gave a brief but succinct report on what was going on in Washington. It is hoped that a full report will appear in the *MONITOR* in the near future.

"Supplemental Security Income: Where It Stands in 1975" brought to the Convention to discuss this subject, a man about whom Federationists have very warm feelings, Sumner Whittier, Director of the Bureau of SSI, Social Security Administration, Baltimore. His position in the bureaucratic hierarchy makes it difficult for him to bring to fruition the reforms we would like to see, but there is no doubt that he carries our message. Mr. Whittier fielded the many hard questions about the program with his usual finesse and aplomb. Evidence of NFB's appreciation was expressed in a motion adopted by the Convention during the banquet.

Discussion of the Randolph-Sheppard Act Amendments of 1974, the new opportunities and challenges inherent in them and the NFB position on set asides, engaged the program participants and the whole Convention in a spirited debate (set out in full in this issue) which crowded the allotted hour well into the time of the next part of the program.

"The Rehabilitation Amendments of 1974: Implications for the Blind," was billed as a panel discussion moderated by our President. Dr. Andrew Adams, Commissioner, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Office of Human Development in Washington; Dr. Douglas MacFarland, Director, Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, RSA;

T. V. Cranmer, Director, Division of Services for the Blind, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services, Kentucky; Dr. James Nyman, Director, Division of Rehabilitation Services for the Visually Impaired, Nebraska; Kenneth Hopkins, Supervisor, Services for the Blind, State of Washington; and John Taylor, Assistant Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, were to have been the participants and the panelists. As readers will see in the dialogue set out, this lively session was also brought to a halt by the restrictions of time. However, Dr. Adams did speak on his assigned topic, "An Overview," when the cheering Federationists settled down after giving him an ovation in appreciation for his efforts in our behalf. Dr. MacFarland, who was received politely, spoke on the effects of the new amendments as viewed "From the Office for the Blind."

Bernard DeLury, Assistant Secretary for Employment Standards, United States Department of Labor, Washington, D. C., whose paper appears elsewhere in this issue, had at his disposal only a very abbreviated time slot to discuss a problem which affects the blind and about which we will hear more in the near future: "Affirmative Action in Employment of the Blind."

The Banquet

Because our afternoon session ran late, and because Federationists, knowing that a wonderful evening was ahead, gathered in the lobby of the Grand Ballroom early, the press of the crowd became so great that it was soon impossible to get off the bank of nine elevators which serve that floor. The Red Lacquer Room was finally opened to make it possible for over 1,500 diners to gather.

The dinner was delicious, the company of the best, the throng, full of anticipation and high spirits, broke into songs and cheers. Ralph Sanders, NFB Second Vice President

and Public Relations Chairman, performed his duties as Master of Ceremonies with great dignity. Introductions of the people seated at the head table brought rousing responses from the diners which were especially warm for our President and Mrs. Jernigan, and Dr. Adams.

Charters were presented to our new affiliates, Vermont, Wisconsin, and South Dakota, and the audience heard their pledges and commitments to the work of our movement. The Reverend Howard May, chairman of the NFB Scholarship Committee, gave his report. The \$1,200 award went this year to popular Californian and worker in our vineyard, Michael Hingson. Mike is a graduate in physics. He is also president of the Orange County Chapter, NFB of California and chairman of the NFB Committee on Research and Evaluation. Prizes were drawn throughout the evening adding much to the general gaiety.

President Jernigan once again amazed, inspired, and delighted his audience by changing the pace and approach in his banquet address, "Blindness: Is the Public Against Us?" The major subject was the treatment of blindness in today's many media. Tipping his barbs at the media with his own brand of wit, he brought under scrutiny, for example, advertisements involving the blind from aids, to tobacco, to sex. The latter subject brought hilarious reactions not only from our members but from Dr. Adams and Mr. Whittier, as well. The roaring tumult of laudatory acclaim at the end of the address was comment enough.

Friday, July 4, 1975

The Fourth of July was properly acknowledged and observed in an enlightening address by T. Euclid Rains, Sr., president of our Alabama affiliate, entitled, "Our Heritage of Freedom."

A most informative discussion on discrimination was included in the report of the CEIP Committee. The topic was, "The Federation and the World: New Philosophy, New Challenges." Rami Rabby and Joanne Fernandes outlined the last year's activities and proposed plans for action. Chairman Rabby then launched into a report of his dealing with the U. S. Department of State on a matter of discrimination in hiring the blind. The case is recounted in full in the August issue of *THE BRAILLE MONITOR*.

Nathan H. Micay, a blind business man from Canada, amused the audience with an account of how he became the president of Athletes Wear Company and his adventures into Federationism.

One of the most exciting events of the Convention occurred during the address of Raymond Kurzweil on the "Kurzweil Reading Machine" (which appears in full in this issue). We heard a machine read in an understandable manner, seven different kinds of type. The implications of this invention are obvious. But the development of the machine, funding, testing, and so on, will be done in conjunction with the NFB. Mr. Kurzweil, a most unusual man, believes that the consumer should have basic input in the development of his reader.

The afternoon was devoted to internal business. Anthony Mannino, in his roll as

chairman, reported on the work and the results of the National White Cane Committee drive for funds; Lawrence Marcelino, as chairman, summarized the condition of the Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Endowment Fund. Time was available earlier in the week and Perry Sundquist, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Budget and Finance, gave his report to the Convention.

Resolutions in most organizations, large or small, are dealt with in perfunctory manner. But not in the Federation where they are discussed and debated with vigor. A number were subject to roll call votes. The Resolutions appear elsewhere in this issue.

If it were not for the fact that the 1976 Convention is reality, it would have been difficult to leave Chicago. But many have already made their reservations to make sure that they will be able to stay at the Headquarters Hotel. The Biltmore Hotel will be the site of the 1976 Convention. The address is 515 South Olive, Los Angeles 90013. Since Iowa challenged California to have more than Iowa in the way of delegates and since NFB of California president, Perry Sundquist, promised at least 500 in the California delegation, GET THOSE RESERVATIONS IN EARLY. The prices are \$15 for singles; \$16 for doubles and twins. The dates are Sunday, July 4, through Friday, July 9, 1976.

THE PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

I would like to remind you of something I've said before. The Roman Senator, Cato, is alleged to have said at the beginning and at the end of every speech he ever made: "Carthage must be destroyed." Let me begin by talking to you about NAC. [Cheers and applause] In many ways the past year has been the best year in Federation history.

You saw evidence of that this morning in the roll call of the states. You can also see evidence of it in what has happened with respect to NAC. Many of the things have not yet appeared in the *MONITOR*, but they will. Some of you have received the June issue already. July and August will round out the very interesting picture. Until you read

the letter from Burt Risley, who is the president of the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind, you will not realize to what low estate NAC has sunk. The state agencies now are beginning to line up. Also, in the July issue of the MONITOR, it is reported that the Bingham Foundation, which gave \$10,000 to NAC last year, has seen fit not to renew that grant although NAC requested that that be done. [Applause] Jonathan May deserves credit for that, really, [applause] because he tracked down the Bingham Foundation people, contacted them, sent them material on NAC. They wrote a letter to the NAC people and set forth a number of questions that had been raised and then said, in effect: "We would not be interested in simply having you counter by telling us how bad the National Federation is; tell us the answers to these questions." [Applause] I followed through on that, and on May 5 or 6, the Bingham Foundation met. A letter was sent to NAC saying, "We did not even bring your application to the board." [Applause]

Bob Sibley of Mississippi, who heads up one of the largest workshops, I believe, in this country, sent a letter, which you will see in the August issue of the MONITOR, to all workshops in the country, pointing out that NAC accreditation was not only unnecessary but detrimental to the workshops. [Applause] The Southern Conference of Librarians met and called NAC by name and specifically rejected the NAC standards. [Applause] Recording for the Blind, with some grumbling, nevertheless has removed from its literature the NAC symbol and is investigating whether it will withdraw from NAC. [Cheers and applause] I can also tell you that Congressman Phillip Burton, who is Chairman of the Democratic Caucus in the House, summoned John Proffitt from the office of the Commissioner on Education, to

meet with his assistant and Jim Gashel. The Congressman's office said, "We have asked. We have been patient. You kept telling us you were investigating. This is no longer enough. You must do something concerning the NAC accreditation and we want a report on what you are going to do and we want it within the next sixty days." [Enthusiastic applause] There has been a good deal of discussion about whether the withdrawal of Federal funds by Dr. Adams from NAC meant what it said. Whatever else it meant, it means that NAC, which was strapped financially, no longer has the Federal grant. This is fact. [Applause] So, when all of this is tabulated in the MONITOR and widely circulated, the records are recorded, and the balances are balanced, we will see whether NAC can ignore the blind safely and securely and continue to function as usual. [Applause]

Now, let me quickly review with you the year just past. It has been our best year. We've had problems, however, with financing in 1974. We had for the first time in a long time, such a drop in financing that we had to operate at a deficit. We were able to manage. I would say to you that unless the members take seriously the request for funds from the individual members, we are going to be in trouble and the many things we are doing will not be possible to continue. As a matter of fact, our financing is down so much that our deficit is in the neighborhood of \$60,000. You must add to that the fact that some \$19,000 came to us, not as true income, but as a refund on equipment which we had bought in recent years and that we sold as part of our consolidations in the Berkeley Office. If you were to add that, we would be running closer to \$80,000. We simply cannot have that continue to happen. And the only way we can do something about it is to do it ourselves.

I have often quoted to you the Biblical injunction we would all do well to heed, that where a man's treasure is—and I assume that in this day of Women's Lib that also means that where a woman's treasure is—there will his/her heart also be. Some people have said, "Why does the National Office (or Jernigan, if they were not friendly) need our money." Well, the answer to that ought to be self-evident. I don't need it, as an individual. That's not what we're talking about. I intend to practice what I preach and give on a regular monthly basis as long as I have any income whatever. No matter how small it may be, the Federation will get some of it every month for the rest of my life. [Applause] I feel no apologies for asking you to make a similar commitment. In one instance I heard the cassette of a state president who was asked by a member, "What do you intend to do?" And that state president said, "I do not intend to tell you what to donate." Well, nobody's telling anybody what to donate. And the person said, "Well, I know, but what do you intend to recommend." To which the answer was, "I do not intend to tell you what to do." Well, I intend to tell myself what to do and to suggest to you what to do. You know, nobody can tell any of us what to do. However, we can talk about what we ought to do. Every Federationist in this country ought to give something each month. Are we saying how much? No. If you can afford it, you ought to give \$50 or \$100 a month. Some people do. If you can't afford that, you ought to give \$25. If you can't afford that, it ought to be \$10. If you can't afford that, then \$5, or \$1, or 50 cents, or a quarter, or a dime. But as a matter of principle, every Federationist in this country ought to give something—something each month.

Now, there are ways we have devised to

try to remedy the financing business. We have, for instance, written a letter, which goes over Dick Edlund's signature. We have had about 50,000 copies printed. These letters contain several things. They come in an envelope lightly sealed. They should be addressed to family or friends. They should be sent, not to our members, for there is no reason why we should pay almost a dime to print a letter and print envelopes and material and stuff it to give to our own members to give back; that doesn't help. These letters are meant for family or friends who would, if you asked them to, make a contribution but who may not get around to doing it. Each of these letters has an outside envelope, the letter that I'm about to read to you, a folder with the ten courtesy rules for blindness which some people know as the "Stop He's on His Way" folder, and a return envelope addressed to Box 11185, Kansas City, Kansas 66111. Here's what the letter says:

Dear Friend: You have received this letter either because you are a member of the National Federation of the Blind or because someone who is a member asked that you receive it. We need your help. The National Federation of the Blind gets no financial or other assistance from the government. We are a nationwide organization of blind people working and doing for ourselves. As officers and members of the Federation, we receive no financial compensation. We donate our time and our labor, so we are not asking you to help us as individuals. Rather we are asking you to help make life better for all blind people. We are organized into chapters in almost every state and locality in the country, so we are your neighbors trying to help ourselves; trying to have a chance.

What Does the National Federation of the Blind Do?

We come together in local, state, and na-

tional meetings to exchange information, discuss common problems, and find mutual encouragement and inspiration. We seek out the newly blinded and give them hope, and help them benefit by our experiences. We inform them of their rights and responsibilities under the law and of training and assistance for which they are eligible. We help with court cases and provide legal assistance when blind persons have been denied their rights. We carry on research to develop new aids and appliances for the blind; provide scholarships for blind students; give counsel to families of blind persons; conduct a nationwide program of public education about blindness and how to deal with it. Most important of all, we are individual blind persons working with other blind persons to help them get opportunity and hope and make their lives better.

What Can You Do?

You can assist us in finding blind persons who need our help. You can also assist us financially. Our organization is in urgent need of funds. Blindness can happen to anyone, any man or woman or child in the Nation. It happened to us. It need not mean tragedy and total dependence. But it can and will unless there is help and encouragement. Please do what you can by sending us \$25, \$10, \$5, whatever you are able, whatever your heart prompts. Without you and others like you, our work cannot continue.

Sincerely,
RICHARD EDLUND
Treasurer

[Applause]

I believe that this is a straightforward letter containing not one scrap of pity but putting it as it is. [Applause] I also believe that there is not a single person here who does not know 10 or 15 people to whom he might give or send these letters — family

members, people you deal with in stores, people you know as friends, your acquaintances. This is one way to help finance this organization. It costs almost a dime apiece to print and stuff these letters. Go to the Literature Table. Get them. Make it work. This is one way to help finance. [Applause] We have 10,000 or 15,000 of them at this Convention and I would like to see all of them taken away and used. If we have 2,000 plus people here and everybody takes 10 letters and sees that they're circulated, that would be 20,000 of these letters.

At the Executive Committee meeting last fall, we appointed a committee called the Bank Draft Pledge Committee. E. U. Parker of Mississippi was made chairman. Dick Edlund and Don Capps are members. That committee will have a report to make to you later, either today or before this Convention is out. Try to sign up so that there can be some automatic contributions in the way of bank pledges.

We also have another project. We have been sending greeting cards through the mail and some of these cards come back to us. As a volunteer project, our local Des Moines chapter has taken the greeting cards returned to us and have packaged them, 10 cards to the packet, and 40 packets to the carton. We intend to sell those. You can buy a carton at 50 cents a packet or \$20 per carton. You can in turn sell them, we think they would sell easily for \$1.50 a packet. That would be only 15 cents a card and you can't find good quality greeting cards at that price or certainly any cheaper than that. If you wanted to sell them at \$1, then you would be selling them at 10 cents. If, however, you buy fewer than a carton, buy only a packet or two or three or five, then we will sell them for \$1 per packet. You could still resell them for \$1.50 or whatever. They are at the sales table. You can see them, you

can take them with you if you want to, or you can order them. But this is another way you can help make funds for the national treasury. We have a spring everyday collection, a fall everyday collection, and we also have a set of Christmas cards; so there are three kinds.

In addition to that, I should make a comment on the candy. You may be interested in knowing that affiliates of the NFB sold last year approximately 85,000 boxes of candy. [Applause] That was the first year. Mr. Ludwig of the Ludwig Candy Company and Mr. Wilkinson will be talking to you tomorrow about that. Samples of the candy are out there available. Through the rest of this year orders will be received like this: You will pay 75 cents per box, that's post-paid to you assuming that you buy 1,200 boxes. It sells for \$1.50 a box. Of the 75 cents, 20 cents will be given by the Ludwig Candy Company to the National Office of the Federation. [Applause]

Our coasters, like the poor, are with us always. [Laughter] We still have those and we're still paying rent on the space they occupy. The Coaster Committee is made up of Jim Omvig, Pat Eschbach, and I have Scanlan here and I don't know whether it's Tom Scanlan or Joyce Scanlan, but anyway, one or another Scanlan is on that committee. That committee undoubtedly has some kind of plans to help move some coasters but you have to help move them.

I would say one more thing to you. One way that our enemies have undertaken to fight us in the past year is to see if they can sic state-solicitation-law people on us and, therefore, with many of the new laws in the states—which, incidentally, have always been applied selectively—we are having more and more problems with our mail campaign. We are either going to think that this organization means enough to us to

finance it or else, ultimately, we will have to wind down as a group. That would be tragic, indeed, for the blind of the Nation. It's that serious; it's that important. You must give thought to our financing. It simply has to be a priority item. And it won't do for people to say, "Well, we need *our* money to operate *our* organization," meaning the state or local affiliate. We do, indeed, need money to operate *our* organization, meaning, the national, state, and local units of one organization, the National Federation of the Blind.

[Cheers and applause]

The money goes for lots of things. Undoubtedly the most influential organ in the field of work with the blind today, affecting blind people, is our own magazine, *THE BRAILLE MONITOR*. [Applause] It costs almost \$200,000 a year to print and circulate the *MONITOR*. We get it done as inexpensively as we can. But it does take money to do it. Braille has increased markedly in cost in the last year. We have talked a long time about having bound editions of the print *MONITOR*. We started printing the *MONITOR* in 1957. Therefore, we have bound sets of the *MONITOR* from 1957 through 1974—17 years' worth. Plus a complete index which is in a separate volume. These 17 years plus the index are \$350 per set. [Sounds of astonishment and some low whistles] That is right. It is astonishing that they are that cheap, I agree with you. [Laughter] Absolutely astounding. The index alone, if you choose to have an index, for '57 through '75, we can sell you for \$20. A few years we have bound extras; it just worked out that way. If you're interested, check with the National Office after the Convention. For 1975 and after that, a year of the *MONITOR* will cost \$25 per year for a bound edition, at least for the time being.

There are other things. I have talked to

you about the film. This afternoon you will have a chance to see and hear the National Federation of the Blind film and the TV spots. The film is usable on television; it is also usable in civic and other presentations. Each state will be given one film. To get a copy, either the official delegate or the state president should go to the Information Desk. The name of this film is, "The Blind: An Emerging Minority." Last year we worked on that and we have been working on it ever since. To make the spots and to get a film of the banquet last year, which is not yet available but will be soon, cost \$22,000 plus prints. The prints will cost, and we have extra copies for sale, \$150 per print. This is not counting what will be given to the states. We also, of course, have the television spots and they will be made available to state and local affiliates without charge.

I want to say a word about another thing we have been using our money for and that's the cassette Presidential Releases. We have spent about \$8,000 on those in the last year. Mostly, I get enthusiastic and favorable responses concerning those releases. [Applause] In some instances, I hear such comments as, "Our chapter president simply summarizes the releases and tells us what you said." My answer to that is that I said it as briefly as I know how to say it and no chapter president has the right to censor what the national President wishes to communicate to the individual members of the Federation. [Cheers and applause] I know that in the few instances it is said, "Well, our chapter members are busy and we just don't take the time to listen." And my answer is that they're not sent for entertainment and so they ought to be played. If one or two members in a chapter insist on it, they will be played and they should be played. [Applause]

Our Washington Office has been getting us

remarkable results. You heard this morning the results of publicity and public relations. The "Tomorrow Show," as I said, comes on on a Monday night. Tuesday morning in Louisiana as a result, we get a bill moved from 26th place on the calendar to number one and it passes the next day. That shows what can happen. [Applause] But that kind of thing can't happen without teamwork, that is, the affiliate in the State of Louisiana could not have gone to arrange the "Tomorrow Show," appeared on it, made the presentation; but, on the other hand, the national President, the Public Relations Committee, and the Washington Office could not have gone to Louisiana and worked in the legislative halls. It takes local, state, and national units working as one to pass that White Cane Law or do whatever we've got to do. Therefore, the National Office has the responsibility to produce the film. You have the responsibility, as individual members, to see that it's shown on local television and to civic groups. The National Office has the responsibility to make the service spots for television and radio. You have the responsibility to go to the local television and radio stations and to see that those spots are used. It is a joint effort. I have had affiliates say to me, "Well, we have a public relations chairman who has written to the radio stations." If it's a matter of writing to the radio stations, I can write them a mass letter out of Des Moines. That's not enough. What we ought to do is organize a carefully concerted campaign in every area and we ought first to go and work with the station on producing our spots and not say, "Our national organization did it," but "we did it." "This is our public service material; we want you to release it for us. Here, this is ours." And then there should be carefully considered and placed phone calls to the station either thanking them for

airing the spots or else asking when they are going to air them. In that way we will get these spots all over the Nation and blanket the Nation with our materials. That's another way of helping to finance the organization. [Applause] The Washington Office, as I said, has operated at a high degree of efficiency during the last year. We have undoubtedly made more contacts than ever in a comparable period of time in the Washington Office.

The Des Moines Office has sent out a great deal of material during the last year. We, for instance, during the past 12 months have sent out, counting aids and appliances, literature, and the rest of it, something like 25,000 pieces per month or over 300,000 pieces in the last year. Again, our money bought these items and circulated them.

We have printed another 500,000 copies of "What Is the National Federation of the Blind," a one-page brochure. The affiliates should see that those are distributed. It's good public relations. Go to fairs, supermarkets, doctors' offices, whatever—get them distributed. When this half million is gone, assuming that you help get enough money, we'll print another half million and distribute those, or a million. [Applause] We have printed lots of new literature this year. We've printed the "College Handbook" again. It's available for distribution. We have printed the booklet, "Your School Has a Blind Child," which is of help to schools where blind persons are students. That is available and has been distributed broadly. The banquet speeches in print, and on record, and in Braille—go to the Literature Table and see what your money has bought and go and make use of our money in our communities across the country.

Let me now talk to you, briefly, about a problem which arose during the last year and which the President of this organiza-

tion and the Executive Committee felt required immediate action. That action was taken. There had been problems with the D. C. affiliate for some time. I got a call from another state affiliate saying, "Are you aware of some of the problems in the D. C. affiliate?" After the situation was outlined, I realized that I had not been aware of some of the things that had happened. Immediately after last year's Convention, when the Coalition Resolution was brought up, and discussed at length, and voted on, information indicates that the president and other members of the D. C. affiliate indicated that they intended to disregard the resolution.

I begin by laying down for you what I believe to be the principles that must be inviolate in this organization. Any member has the right to whatever view he wishes to hold but the rights of all of us as blind persons and as members of the organization, demand that when a matter has been brought up in Convention, and discussed, and voted on, and settled, that it be binding upon all of us who are members. That is the essence. [Loud applause and sounds of approval] If democracy does not mean that, then democracy means absolutely nothing. It means that you can have dictatorship of the minority in the name of freedom. That won't do.

There were other problems. I discussed what must be done with the members of the Executive Committee. We acted with dispatch. The D. C. affiliate was holding a meeting that very night. The Executive Committee decided—but I do not wish to duck responsibility, I recommended that it decide and I helped execute the policy—that Ned Graham, as the Executive Committee person closest to the District of Columbia, go to the affiliate and say that the National Office of the Federation was lifting the charter of this affiliate—not suspending

it—but lifting its charter for reorganization, for there had been violation of the relationship of this affiliate with the total body. The Executive Committeeperson in the area went. The president of the Virginia affiliate could not go but sent the closest ranking officer he could. The president of the Maryland affiliate went. Therefore, it was an action taken jointly by Federation leadership that could be assembled.

It was discovered that not only had the president of the D. C. affiliate joined a coalition of the whole group of the disabled but was to serve as the paid executive director of that coalition and was to set up an office in the same building as the office of the Federation. In addition, it had been clear for a long time that the D. C. affiliate was not broadly based, was excluding blind persons, was not making an appeal that would truly represent the blind of the area.

As national President, I went to the District of Columbia late in the month of January to conduct a reorganizing meeting. No one was told that he would be excluded. When the meeting was held, as a matter of fact, a past-president of the D. C. affiliate and some of the people who had been leaders in the affiliate, did come, but mostly we had a lot of new people. I said to them that it would not do simply because an affiliate said that it was the affiliate that it had total and absolute say in its geographic area. If it did, a small group of people could get an affiliate name and then ultimately reduce the membership to two or three people and say that nobody else had a right to be in the Federation in that area and the National Office could have no say and the total national body could have no say. That would not do. Indeed, any group has the right to organize if it chooses, but also the National Federation of the Blind has the right to determine who will be called Feder-

ationists and members of the Federation in any given area. [Applause] Therefore, we intended to reorganize the affiliate. A past president rose and said, "I don't understand what you mean by not being broad based." Somebody else got up and said, "I know exactly what he means because I work in a sheltered workshop and I tried to be a member of the D. C. affiliate and I was told that, we already have our quota of workshop workers and, therefore, you can't be a member." [Cries of protest] The past president then said, "I don't understand that." Three or four other people in the audience leaped up and said, "I understand it because that's the way I got treated, too." That, of course, is what we are talking about.

We did reorganize that affiliate. The evidence of the wisdom of that move can, I think, be seen in the activities of that affiliate since that time. You have here a large delegation, much larger than last year and I think much more representative. That affiliate is on the way and is growing. [Applause] It was not a pleasant task to perform; but it was a necessary task to perform. I felt that it was the right thing to do and I'll give you an example of my notion of the way leadership runs. I said when we had got through discussing and were ready to start, "Now, those who don't want to be members, who are just here to listen, I think the time ought to be now when we ask them to go along. We've debated this thing. Let us organize our affiliate and move." So somebody said, "I thought all Federation meetings were open." "They are," I said. The person said, "Well, we ought to stay." A rising tide of murmurs came, "Let 'em stay." So I said, "Fine. Then let's everybody stay." So somebody leaped up as if to say he really had scored one and said "Aha. Why did you change your mind?" And I said, "I didn't. I'm trying to demonstrate

to you the flexibility of leadership. I try to lead according to consensus. It is my opinion, and still is, that you people ought to go your way because you're not really here to be helpful. But the majority in the room felt otherwise and, therefore, that's the way we are going to do it. I don't feel embarrassed about it, at all. There's no contest between you and me."

So I feel this way about it: I did what I honestly felt was best to do. I did it in consultation with the Executive Committee. I did it in accordance with the spirit of last year's Convention mandate and I did it, recognizing fully that a president operates at his peril; that is, I did it believing that I could bring it to you and see if you would back what I did. [Applause and cheers] In other words, I take seriously the mandate that we are a democracy, that the Convention is the supreme authority of this organization, that the President is elected to lead and is expected not to sit around and calculate whether it is the expedient thing to do but rather whether it's the right thing for the organization, and then he is also expected to face the problems that result if his decisions are wrong. If they're wrong enough times, then he ought to be replaced and somebody else ought to be picked. But above all things, if you have to choose between a president who will do something but does things wrong, occasionally, and a president who won't do anything because he is afraid to act, if you have any sense as an organization, you will pick the former and not the latter. [Cheers and applause] In other words, we are a people's movement; we are not simply a social organization engaged in niceties. That's the way I feel about it. [Applause]

I intend to put first to a voice consensus from this group and then, if there's very much division about it, I intend to put it to a roll call vote, whether you approve of

the way your President and Executive Committee behaved in the instance of the Washington, D. C., affiliate. I don't propose to spend a lot of time threshing and debating it unless that comes to be a necessity. We can take time to debate the matter. I wish to know first by voice vote, do you feel that the actions taken were proper and are you willing to approve them? [Emphatic assenting voice vote; no dissenting voices, applause]

Joie Stewart is the president of our D. C. affiliate and a fine president she is, and we've got a fine board. Many of those people are here. I urge all of you to get acquainted with them. They're as good Federationists as we have. [Applause]

This was the year we kept our promise to ourselves and the blind of the Nation that we would have completed the organization of all the states by 1975. Without reviewing it, I'll just mention that Vermont, Wisconsin, and South Dakota came into the Federation, making all 50 states and the District of Columbia. [Applause]

It has, indeed, been our best year. As you know from the MONITOR, Dr. Adams named me personally as consultant and the National Federation of the Blind as consultant for all programs for the blind of this country. [Cheers and applause] That appointment has been given substance by the fact that we have been asked to pass in review a variety of requests for grants and other matters. I would also add, not necessarily connected with this, that NAC has recently requested a new grant from the Federal office. [Groans and laughter]

I am pleased to announce certain other things to you. We have fairly good assurance of another appearance on the "Tomorrow Show." Also, something of even more consequence, on July 23 of this year, I go to Washington, D. C., to appear as the speaker

at the luncheon of the National Press Club. [Vigorous applause] That speech will be carried on National Public Radio. I will appear, also, on the program, "All Things Considered," on National Public Radio. Further, we have been told by "Playboy Magazine" [loud cheers and applause] with a circulation of 6,000,000, that they will consider an opinion piece concerning our movement and that they will carry an ad from us without cost. [Applause] Ralph Sanders and the Public Relations Committee have made a contact in such a way that we will now be getting ads in most of the major national magazines: "Time," "Newsweek," and others. [Applause] Further, an article is now in process, which will be coming out any time, highly favorable to us and discussing our movement in the *Wall Street Journal*. [Cheers and applause] Add to that the amount of publicity we have received at this Convention and consider what one "Tomorrow Show" did in a state legislature, and I repeat to you that it's been our best year. [Applause]

We are active, and since we are active, we find ourselves in battle with our opponents in the courts. In Iowa, as you know, the Supreme Court, on a technicality, reversed the lawsuit brought by the Iowa Council of the Blind against me, in my capacity as Director of the Commission, and the other members of the Iowa Commission for the Blind. In that case, now, we will return to the lower court. Our opponents should have hoped that they would have lost that case because all it means is that on the technicality it will go back, costs in the lower court were already assessed against their real estate; that's now up for grabs; and the Supreme Court costs will now have to be paid, and then the lower court costs. I can assure you that when it gets through, the victory in the Iowa lawsuit will not be in doubt. Even

so, obviously I would have preferred that the Supreme Court sustain what was done.

In Michigan we have started a new case. Tom Munn is here. You will hear a good deal about this later in the week, but the Civil Service Commission in Michigan has now set up separate registers for the handicapped and sees fit to give automatic low scores to blind persons, and sees fit not to let blind persons compete on terms of equality in the open registers. The State agency for the blind, instead of helping, tried to coerce Munn into silence and the Federation and Tom Munn have gone to court. [Applause] Somebody said we can collect enough funds to help pay for the case, and my answer was that since this case is only one of many and is ongoing, and since we need funds in the treasury, help collect the funds and let's fight whatever cases come. My answer to you also is this: We will win this case and others like it, if all of us make it possible financially. We've got to do that.

In the Cleveland vending stand case, the day of reckoning is at hand. We have not settled the case but our opponents have made overtures and have tried to get a settlement. Trial date, it now appears, will be sometime this fall. We are preparing to go to court and fight. [Applause]

Another state agency came into our column. The State of Washington, to say the least, has not had a progressive agency. [Laughter] That agency is now headed by Kenneth Hopkins, who was head of the Idaho agency, and the Idaho agency is now headed by a good man named Howard Barton.

The American Issues Forum has asked us to publish and distribute for them material concerning the Bicentennial. It will come out on record and will be carried widely throughout the country in libraries, throughout our organization, and otherwise.

Let me deal with one or two things in conclusion. As is always the case with an active organization, we have plusses and minuses. The workload continues to increase. I do not wish to spend a lot of time discussing that, but only to say to you that as part of the on going relationship between the President and the membership, you should do what you can to try to carry the load. I've said before, when you write to me, if I do not need to answer the letter, then it would be helpful to say so. I will try to answer all letters that are written. If you send cassettes to me, it may be six months before I read them. It may be because it takes longer to read a cassette than it does a letter. People invariably believe that because they send you a cassette, they ought to fill it and also that you should respond to them by cassette. If you do, you tend to have no record of what they wrote or what you wrote. It's not the best use of time. If you choose to send me a cassette, fine; but I will likely give it to somebody else to look over for me or I will read it myself as I can. It's not that I don't want to. It's just that I answer more than one hundred letters a week and I deal with more than that and it's simply not good use of what time I have.

Here's a letter that I received. See how you feel about this. I got it after last year's Convention. It says: "I met this fellow on a plane last summer. He was very interested in the NFB and wanted to attend our Convention. Could you write to him? He's a sighted guy." Wouldn't it have been helpful if the writer of that letter had simply written to the man; that is, Federationists all ought to be missionaries and not just say "I've got a good contact there, Mr. President, you write him."

I would say, also, that I forgot to mention going through the aids and appliances business. I feel in a real dilemma about that.

We tried aids and appliances. I recognize the need. I recognize the desirability of having aids and appliances for sale out of the National Office. The costs, however, are considerable. We have had to subsidize it. If we sell aids and appliances so that we break even, it means making the operation large enough, having a staff member full time doing it, and it means a lot of other things. I don't know whether we can carry on the aids and appliances sale and do justice to it and not have our total effort suffer. I think we ought to continue to bring aids and appliances to the National Convention to sell. I think, however, that the Convention itself ought to make the decision as to how we ought to proceed and within the capacity of what I can do, I would follow that mandate. But there have been real problems in trying to operate the aids and appliances as part of our total operation. It has been more of a problem than ever anticipated. I feel that there ought to be some consensus taken on how we ought to proceed. If we get a chance during the rest of the week, we ought to discuss it in open Convention because there are pro's and con's to it.

As you know, we have won the Judy Miller case in Denver. [Applause] The Judy Miller case was to come to trial, but the Denver people didn't want to face trial, so we settled with them. Some interesting things have happened since that time. Our Teachers Division, with Bob Acosta, got hold of the Denver school officials and talked to them. The school officials tried to deny that it ever happened at all. They said, "Sure we're hiring a blind person to teach this fall but that has nothing to do with the lawsuit—just a coincidence. We, as a matter of fact, have been recruiting actively all along." [Laughter]

I give you to think about, for whatever it's worth, a letter which I wrote only last

week to a fairly new Federationist. He's a person who has been blind for less than a year. He got acquainted with our movement, read the material, became fired up as a Federationist. He then moved to another part of the country and attended the local chapter in that area. He was disappointed. He was told that he must come to at least three meetings before he could be considered for membership. He was told that he would be discussed in his absence about whether he could join; that it didn't matter if he had been a member in some other place or attended meetings in some other place; and there were other problems. You can consider how you would feel. And then he said, "I would like to build this chapter. What do you think I ought to do." Well, I wrote him a letter and, perhaps, it has broader application. I said this to him:

"In the beginning all revolutions have more promise than performance about them. In more than one instance, when George Washington stood forth to fight the British, he pretended to have fortifications which he did not possess, using bales of straw or anything else he could lay his hands on, to deceive the British. Not only did he have to pretend to the British but also to his own soldiers. Troops in one province were encouraged by tales of strength and valor from divisions of the army in other localities. Sometimes, doubtless, he had to pretend to himself to build up his courage and give him strength for the battles to come.

"When I was in California in the 1950's, we conducted a study on the employment of the blind in the teaching profession. We found that the blind of California had no blind persons teaching in regular public school classes. I had heard that Ohio had 13. I suspected that these were largely non-existent being trumped up claims by the state agency to bolster its prestige. I sus-

pected that many of these teachers were high partials, not considered blind by themselves or by others. However, I did not believe that the state agency would give such a picture if asked for a letter and a report. So I wrote the Ohio agency a complimentary letter and told them I would like a statement about the blind of the state who were teaching in the public schools. Back came the reply, glowing as expected. We made much of that reply in California, using it to encourage our own members to have faith, that they could achieve, and, also beating superintendents over the head with the statement that if the blind of Ohio can teach, then the blind of California can, too. Today there are more than one hundred blind persons teaching in the public schools of California. [Cheers and applause] And they are for real. They are cash customers.

"Now, perhaps, we can use California to beat Ohio up to the line [laughter], and both of them to encourage other states in the Nation. More and more of our local chapters are solid and substantial, aware of the movement and what they must do to make it succeed. But some are still chapters in name only, waiting for the touch of a leader and the sound of the call to awaken. If all of our people were alert, well-educated, aware, knowledgeable, enthusiastic, then it is highly questionable whether we would need the movement at all. Much of our work is still ahead of us, yearning, challenging, needing, and waiting to be done. Your letter shows that you are perceptive. It also indicates that you have read the material and understood what it said. Therefore, I can only say to you, you are there and I am not. The chapter needs building and strengthening. So build and strengthen it. Find a way. The way exists. What more can I say to you? If there is resistance, find a way to overcome it. If there is resentment, sooth it.

If there is lack of knowledge, teach. If you lack the knowledge yourself, learn. The need is great and the time is now. You are the one who must find the way and do the job and make it work," is what I said to him. [Applause]

And here is a paragraph from Joyce Lebowitz to me who said: "I have a personal thought about the Federation which I want to share with you. It is the translation of an ancient Hebrew prayer which reads in part:

Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children; shall talk of them when thou sittest in thy house; when thou walkest by the way; when thou liest down and when thou riseth up.

And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand; and they shall be forefrontlets between thine eyes

And thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thy house and upon thy gates.

I feel that this is one objective of the National Federation of the Blind." [Applause]

I conclude this report of the best year in our history by saying to you that there is,

as there has always been, a covenant between the President and the members of the Federation. As I see it, it is the responsibility of the President not to avoid personal danger, not to count the costs, to be willing to give, to be willing to sacrifice, never to ask you to go where he is unwilling to lead. It is the responsibility of the President, indeed, to go forth in the front ranks, stand on the barricades. It is the responsibility of the Federation to give full support for the leadership which they expect from the President. It is the responsibility of each member of the Federation so to conduct himself that it is possible for this great movement to go forward and to continue to strengthen itself. It is a covenant between the members of the Federation and the blind, not only of this generation, but the blind who went before and helped make us what we are, and the blind who will come after and who will either benefit or suffer from what we do or fail to do. This is the covenant that I see between the presidency and the membership of the Federation and, I say to you, so help us God, we must make that covenant work. [Prolonged applause and cheers]

SERVICE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE LIBRARY PROGRAM FOR THE BLIND

BY

FRANK KURT CYLKE, Chief
Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
Library of Congress
Washington, D. C.

President JERNIGAN. Last year, when Mr. Cylke came and spoke with us, I suppose that we were so delighted to find some cooperation, some breath of fresh air in that division, that there was a honeymoon effect. I believe that our reaction so indicated. Things have occurred during the last year which would indicate, to me at least, that the honeymoon is over. I do not think that that

means we must necessarily have a divorce even though, with full knowledge of the political implications of it, Mr. Cylke has chosen to go and appear at the American Council of the Blind convention later this month. I think such infidelity, as so often happens can, perhaps, take some of the bloom off a honeymoon, but doesn't necessarily mean a divorce. Marriage can be a mar-

riage of convenience. It can also be a marriage which can have some love and trust. It simply means that there has to be give and take.

A number of things have happened during the past year. I wish to recount a few of those to you and I wish to say what I have to say before Mr. Cylke comes on so that he is in no sense deprived of his right to make any comment he cares to make in response. In the first place, we had a matter of testimony before a Senate committee concerning the budget of the division. As far as I am concerned, Mr. Cylke's behavior in that matter was less than admirable. That behavior was that he had a private conversation with Jim Gashel to say that he would be glad if we saw fit to testify to get some more money for Braille books. That's fine. We could have done that. But also when we gave our testimony we pointed out some of the problems we saw in the projected books, and in the multi-state centers. To spend our tax money and the time of the division in writing up a refutation of that testimony which he has been distributing at this Convention in both Braille and on cassette, is fine. It's not a very strong statement and it really doesn't do anybody any harm. I would urge you to get it and read it but I would also urge you to keep in mind that if that money had not been spent in that way, we might very well have had one more Braille book or magazine this year. That's a poor way to use our tax money. [Applause] Besides, it demonstrates a failure to understand the lesson which hopefully should have been learned at last year's Convention. Anybody who really believes that he can come to a Convention of the Federation with a pamphlet and propagandize successfully, misses the mood of this organization. It isn't that way.

As to the substance of it all, our state-

ment was that the projected books were probably not a good thing on which to continue to spend money. When we first went into the program, sure, Congress mandated the broadening of the program to include the physically handicapped. I doubt that that mandate would have been given over the opposition of the Federation. We agreed, on assurances from the division, that services to the blind would not suffer and that the emphasis would not be taken away from the blind. Now, I think that's still valid and it is still the Division for the *Blind* and the Physically Handicapped. It was our division first. We said we didn't care, in fact, we were willing to have other groups get services but we wondered if it wouldn't be better for them to get services from another division so we wouldn't have this very business. Yes, I know, that the budget has not been cut for programs for the blind. But I also know that the percentage of the budget that goes into programs for the blind may be another matter, and I know also that what we now face is this: Inflation and increasing appropriations have been such that there is some question as to whether percentage-wise we have had the kind of increases we might have had. Now, that's not all Mr. Cylke's fault. I hasten to say that. It may not be anybody's fault.

The problem, I say, is that the Library of Congress Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped must realize that our stand, as I see it, is this: It is not enough for people to come to our Convention and make nice sounds of cooperation and then feel that we will not speak out when we feel that we need to speak out on issues. We're going to do that no matter who it is, nor no matter how friendly. On the other hand, it's got to be kept in perspective. I am not suggesting that we ought to go to war with Mr. Cylke. Mr. Cylke, as a matter

of fact, with all that I've said, in my judgment is the best thing we've had happen to the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. I think he's done, on the whole, a good job. [Applause] No attempt to take away from that. I mean exactly, for my part, what I said to begin with. I think the honeymoon's over but I don't think that it means that there can't continue to be a marriage. I think that it means that when we think things ought to be altered, we ought to say so. I think Mr. Cylike ought not to blow his cool or get mad about that or sulk or anything else. I think he ought to listen to us as consumers. On the other hand, when he disagrees with us, when he decides that a thing ought not to be done a given way, we ought not to blow our cool, or sulk or go off and get mad about it. We ought to have a give-and-take relationship. I think, as I say, that Mr. Cylike has done a creditable job. Mr. Cylike as a matter of fact has done a good job. I think, at the same time, that there are things in that job that I for one, and I believe that this organization, ought to be aware of and so on. But we ought not to be unqualifiedly critical. In other words, we ought to give and take and discuss.

Now, Mr. Cylike comes to us in a different atmosphere. I would say just this to you before putting him on. I was surprised when I learned that he was going to the ACB convention. I called him and said, "I think that's unfortunate, that you ought not to do that. It will have political implications." Well, he stewed and fretted about it, first demonstrating some annoyance with my having brought it up and then he said, "Well, I've got to go because we must give service to all blind people." I said, "Of course, I know that. Of course, you should give service to all blind people. We'd object as much as anybody if you didn't give service

to the ACB members. That's not what I'm saying to you and you know it isn't what I'm saying to you. You could just as well have sent someone else, an assistant, for instance. The United States, for instance, has relations with all kinds of countries but its relations with Luxembourg, China, France, England and West Germany are not all the same or all at the same level. You have ambassadorial, consular levels, you have all kinds of things. You know what I mean." Then, later on, Mr. Cylike said he was going. I talked with him about whether he ought to come to this Convention at all, but as things went on I said, "Of course you ought to come."

Now we have a different relationship and we must face that as a fact of life. But that doesn't mean a relationship of hostility, or conflict, or anything else. It does mean that we should feel free to bring to your attention things we think ought to be done. It means that you should feel free to disagree and bring to our attention things that ought to be done. We'll be back before the Senate Committee and the House Committee, too, testifying next year [cries of "hear, hear," cheers, and applause] and we will not only bring to their attention things that we think out to be improved or changed, but we will also be commending Mr. Cylike on things that we think that he's done that are good. There will be more of those, I suspect, than things we think are bad. So, with all of that brief introduction, I want to present to you, Mr. Cylike. [Cheers and applause]

Mr. CYLIKE. Thank you very much, Mr. Jernigan. I appreciate the introduction and I appreciate your applause. Before I go on, let me say that my religion frowns upon divorce, and I don't personally approve of separations. So I think that the honeymoon, indeed, is over. I think that that is not bad. It is a day of learning and getting adjusted

to one another and so forth, you go on to a deeper, more mature, more thoughtful, more fruitful, and more promising relationship. [Applause] Let me say that I came last year and I came this year and as long as I'm in the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, as long as you people want me to come, as long as you want the division to be represented and have a display, we will be here year after year after year. But it will be, of course, at your wish. [Applause]

Now, with your permission I prepared—I did anticipate, Mr. Jernigan—some discussion, so I prepared a very brief formal statement and I'd like to go into that for a very few minutes and then I could get to the points, if you like, that you raised, and then to any points that anyone from the audience cares to bring up.

Normally, I talk off the cuff but let me read the first two paragraphs, here, verbatim, and then I will go into my normal style.

The opportunity, I wrote several weeks ago, to address this knowledgeable group for the second consecutive year, is truly appreciated. You here represent a significant segment of the Library of Congress reader or consumer universe; a segment which has always contributed to the growth and development of the national programs which serve the library needs of the blind and the physically handicapped. In his letter of invitation of March 14, Mr. Jernigan indicated that the members of the National Federation of the Blind came to have a feeling of friendship for me; and I am going to interpret that applause just a few minutes ago as friendship. I would like to take this opportunity to say that I, too, did have, do have, and hopefully, always will have a great spirit of friendship for you. [Applause] I look forward to this conference, I anticipated it. I'm here; I came on Sunday, and will

stay through the morning of the Fourth of July, to build on our already strong foundation of mutual trust, mutual sharing of ideas, and our mutual desire to build our special type of library service to a very high level.

This year I was to bring with me three of our associates. Unfortunately, one of those people, and I will mention her in a moment, could not come due to a very serious illness in her immediate family. But Tom Bickford, whom you all know, came with us—he led us in some songs this morning; and Dick Evenson is on the platform here behind me and will help in answering questions relating to areas of his particular concern, Braille, for example. The person who did not come is Mary Jack Wintle, who has replaced Mr. Galozzi as Assistant Chief of the Division. She has served in the division for 12 years. I just mention her academic background: She has a bachelor's degree from the University of Louisiana, a master's degree from Yale University, and she has a graduate library degree. I am sorry that she could not be here.

Now, in talking with Mr. Jernigan earlier this year—January or February—we agreed that service and technology in the library program would be an appropriate topic for the Convention today. And I will limit myself, as I said, very, very briefly, to technological implications for service of areas that we are currently working in and two areas where we are going to do work in the future.

Now, technology and service. The library program for the blind is technology bound. In other words, the talking book program, cassette program, and the Braille effort are all constrained by the state of the art in transcription, reproduction, stereotyping, and computer technology. This service to you is constrained by how effectively we use the technology or how ineffectively we use them or if we ignore them and don't use

them at all. So that to me it is a very, very important area. Now in the areas of disc and cassette, what are we doing? We are broadening the $8\frac{1}{3}$ rpm flexible discs magazine production. At the same time we are aware of the handling and packaging problems that exist and we are trying to improve. We understand that there is some sound degradation when you get to the inner grooves and we're working to improve that. In the cassette area, you know about the $1\frac{5}{16}$. We'll never reach perfection but hopefully we'll have far less spills, jams, and annoyances. We have a contract out now with a commercial operation to develop what I call the super cassette tape shell, a cassette tape shell that will be far better than the ones we have been using in the past. We're perfecting the combination record player-cassette player. Hopefully many of you have examined it in the display area and, if you haven't, I urge you to go there. The one that will be produced will be more compact and the control board will be less cluttered although it will be basically the same concept. But, it will depend upon your reaction, the reactions of the consumers, as to whether this is an acceptable concept and an acceptable way to go. So please talk to Dick Evenson, please talk to Tom Bickford, talk to me, and examine the machine. We will be running a test in the field with members of this organization as well, and you can comment then. But this is a chance for 2,000 people—don't all line up at the same time—to examine it.

We are still working hard to lower costs in the area of making compatible subassemblies within the machines. In the computer-related field, our work is really exceeding our specifications and our expectations. I won't go into the details; I mentioned them last year. Needless to say, the first cassette tape book catalog is on schedule and will be avail-

able, we are promised, in late December of this year. We have a Braille-print-train on our Library of Congress IBM 390 computer, and we have samples of that output which will be available at the exhibit booth in the next couple of days. We're developing an automated inventory control system for machines and peripheral equipment, cassette players, record players, headsets, and so forth. When Mrs. tenBroek told about the problems with her mailing list, I was very sympathetic because obviously we have significant problems with ours. We are working here in the computer area and it should be less than a year before there are significant changes for the better. Like the Federation, we rely on prompt notification of address changes and so forth, but even then there are technical things that can be done to improve.

We are also working in the area of Braille music production on a computer-based system with the American Printing House for the Blind in Louisville. There are two new areas—one you might like to pursue later with Dick Evenson. He is the person who is coordinating this effort, but we're developing research into a telebook area which initially will be developed as a test with readers in the Washington, D. C., area, having books carried over telephone lines. Very simply an aside is, if you can remember the juke boxes of the 30s and 40s—I don't know whether that was in my youth or not, I guess the 40s and 50s would be my youth—but you remember the juke boxes that used to be there, when you put in the dime or when you accessed the records, it would start at the beginning of the record. You can imagine this juke box, if you will, in a remote location, and you can access it through your telephone line and eventually through a television line, right into your house. But the modification is a good one. The point that

we are trying to work to is that you don't have to start at the beginning of the record, you'll be able to start where you left off. Now I threw that out as a small taste and will let Dick expand later on, if you like, and we'll see what the question and answer period shows up.

We are also developing a computer program to produce Spanish Braille. We have this type capability, as I said, to produce English Braille. The reason for that is that, of course, the great number of Spanish-speaking Americans, both those living in Puerto Rico and those living in many of the states of the United States—Florida, New York, California, Arizona, and so forth. Well, we're working in technology; we'll always be working in technology. We will be working, in our next big effort, and concurrently with that, will be in the area of service, to improve the service which is given to you as readers through the regional libraries. Mr. Jernigan, in the beginning of his speech, and this is part of my prepared words, talked about consumer input, and I did, Mr. Jernigan, and do accept the concept of consumer input. And I listed a few of the things that occurred during the last two years. For example, when we tried, under Mr. Evenson's direction, to evaluate our position regarding Braille, we went to individuals but we also went to five groups of blind users and one of those groups, of course, was the National Federation of the Blind. Many of you in this audience I know, because I've talked with you in the last few days, participated in that study. The study is available. We ran a four-track cassette test to see if, indeed, the four-track $\frac{1}{16}$ speed was acceptable to users. Again we went to the user, to the consumer, directly, to find this out. When we came to selecting specific titles, book titles, for inclusion in the collection, we solicited informa-

tion from organizations and from individuals as well as from the staff of the Division for the Blind.

We solicit, if you will, recommendations for professional appointments from the libraries around the country, every professional position above the grade of GS VII, which in the Government implies beginning professional grade. A specific letter is written to Mr. Jernigan, asking if he has any specific candidates for that position, and we fill on the basis of the returns we get from the broad solicitation.

In summary, I would just say to you that we have, in the last two years, solicited consumer reactions. We are now, we have been, I think many of you have talked to me in the last few days, either in meetings, or individually, or at the table, and we will continue to. That, anticlimatically, is the end of my prepared topic. [Applause]

President JERNIGAN. Thank you, Mr. Cylke, and I'll ask you to get a mike and Mr. Evenson also may do that if he likes.

* * *

President JERNIGAN. Mr. Cylke, let me pursue one thing with you for a moment. Then, as I say, we are going to take questions from the audience. I made my remarks first to give you an opportunity, if you chose, to make any statements concerning them and you certainly can do that anywhere along the line that you care as we go. I would say that with respect to consumer input, my notions about it come down to being like this—I think more wars are caused in the world by misunderstanding than by intent. I think that it's clear that one thing that we need to do at this Convention is for us in this organization and you to understand each other. Let me indicate what I mean by that. When you came into the library, you indicated to me that you had learned well from your predecessor and

hoped not to have any war with the organized blind. And I indicated to you that I had learned something too, and thought we had. I told you—I'm not trying to hold anything back—I told you that I had led a number of campaigns and probably one of the most unpopular campaigns I ever led was the war we had with your predecessor. But the army held. It didn't desert.

You see, where we are is this: You, in the beginning, as I see it, did pay some attention to the recommendations that we made to you, for instance, took some objectionable language off the records. That's symbolic, a minor matter, that was really not a major thing, we did not regard it as such and I don't think you did. It took no sacrifice. You came to our Convention last year and you made us a fine speech, and that's good. That's again a warrant of intent, an indication of a pledge of faith.

You say that you solicit my opinion as President of the Federation on positions to be filled. Indeed, that is so. I have given you recommendations on a number of positions and never once have those recommendations been heeded or followed. Now, that doesn't mean that you ought to hire everyone that this organization recommends to you. That is not what I'm saying and I hope that you do not understand me to be saying that. But if you ask us for ten recommendations and we give you ten recommendations and nobody we recommend ever gets hired, after a while one says to the devil with it, what's the point in recommending anybody. [Applause] In other words, there's got to be some indication that recommendations and viewpoints make a difference. Now, we are the largest organization of blind people in this country. You see here before you not just 2,000 plus people, but if you were in this room this morning, and I'm sure you were, you also see here people who speak

for the blind of this Nation. We have people here from every state and not just speaking for themselves, but for the blind of their states, localities, chapters in every area. Now personally, we like you as an individual. You come and you dialogue with us and you talk with us. And out of warmth and out of courtesy, you get up and say "You know, I'm going to come back and talk with you. I hope you will be my friends." You're going to get some applause, yes. But let me make one thing clear to you. I intend to give you what I believe will be a demonstration of something in a minute, and that is, when I speak to you I'm not speaking for me, and not simply speaking for the Iowa Commission for the Blind, I'm not speaking for it at all, and I'm not speaking as a person. I am saying to you, that when I speak to you, regardless of anything you may distribute at this Convention, regardless of individual conversations you may have, when this organization elects a president, when that president or committees of this organization speak to you officially, we're speaking for the blind of this Nation and we're going to come as one unit to you. I ask this audience to indicate that. [Loud, prolonged applause and cheers] And when we support you, we will support you as one; that is, we will speak with a single voice with you and as a part of the new relationship which has come to exist, I will appoint, before this Convention is over, a committee on library services; that committee, along with the President, will be dealing with the library. I guess I have one question and then anything you care to say in response to anything that's been said; you ought to have a full opportunity to do that with the audience; and then we ought to take questions, I think, from the audience.

Mrs. Grannis told that at a recent conference you said that more and more physi-

cally handicapped, which after all will constitute by far the majority target population, would have to be considered in policies of your division and, therefore, that policies and programs would have to be geared to the needs of that group and that the blind, in effect, would need to take that into account and expect to be treated and behave accordingly. I'm not quoting exactly; I'm giving what I understood to be the sense of the statement. If that is so, I can tell you that we will resist that with real vigor and, I think, effectively. [Applause] Now, I think the demands of fair play are such that you ought to have equal time to say what you have to say to me or us.

Mr. CYLKE. Thank you. Well, I believe Mr. Jernigan, that I do understand you and I applaud the fact that the group of the National Federation of the Blind would come as one, you representing them. I got that feeling last year, and I have it again this year, and there is no misunderstanding whatsoever. I would like to comment on two or three points you made now and then to reflect for just a moment on the points you made before; and then I would be delighted to take any other questions.

President JERNIGAN. All right.

Mr. CYLKE. I do solicit requests for suggestions for hiring people at the professional level in the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. And, Mr. Jernigan indicated that he, indeed, did this. He then alluded to the fact that if one made ten suggestions and they were all rejected that you'd say "To heck with it." And I wouldn't blame Mr. Jernigan, either. Except that I have received one suggestion and, admittedly, after due consideration in the Federal hiring process, it was unfortunate, because I really wanted to, but it was unfortunate that we could not accede to that. But it was one, not ten.

President JERNIGAN. Mr. Cylke, as a correction in fact, I suggested to you that instead of putting Jackie Wintle in you put Steve Herman in; you did not do that. I suggested to you that Ellen Zable would not be good to come in, because that would be a problem for the organized blind movement; you did not do that. I suggested to you that Roy McLuen might be put in as musical librarian; you did not do that. Do you want me to go on? You just are not leveling with us. [Applause and cheers] Is that fact or not—fact or not?

Mr. CYLKE. The first one was not a fact; the second two were. I am sorry that I overlooked the specific individuals.

President JERNIGAN. You mean that I did not suggest to you that Steve Herman ought to be put up?

Mr. CYLKE. You said Jackie Wintle, no sir, you did not.

President JERNIGAN. Did I not suggest that he ought to be promoted?

Mr. CYLKE. Not to that position.

President JERNIGAN. Did I suggest that he ought to get some position.

Mr. CYLKE. [Silence followed by laughter from the audience.]

President JERNIGAN. You were in Los Angeles—

Mr. CYLKE. I would like to say that we might better talk in terms of positions, rather than individuals. I think that that is not—

AUDIENCE. Grumbles, no, no.

President JERNIGAN. No. No. Hear him out, please. Go ahead Mr. Cylke.

Mr. CYLKE. I would prefer, when we talk about personnel matters, to positions, rather than to individuals. If we could just let it stand at that, I think that the point I'm making is obvious, that the individuals have not been asked here. We are talking about

very sensitive personnel matters, placement, promotion, et cetera.

President JERNIGAN. Wouldn't have done that except that I think when you make a direct statement, that has to be challenged on factual grounds.

Mr. CYLKE. The next point I would like to address is the fact that the testimony before the Senate. I did, indeed, talk to Jim Gashel. I like to think that we have a very pleasant and professional relationship. I am very fond of Jim, and his wife, and am delighted to hear about his child. We have had social occasions together. And I applaud the NFB for testifying before the House and Senate this year, and I would think that they should, if they wish, testify next year. There is no implication that that is not right and just. I think that is absolutely the thing to do. I think that in the area, for example, of Braille, we have a serious problem, a significant problem. You alluded earlier today to the increase in prices. They have gone up 55 percent in a three-year period that I know about. And they're going higher. They have leveled off a bit, but I know they are going higher and we will need more and more assistance both at the Library of Congress Division level, in building the budget, in talking to the Library of Congress administration in developing that budget, and I think that if the NFB in years to come feels that it is appropriate to testify, I think that, indeed, they should. I don't in any way mean that. Now, to propagandize—if it came off that way, I'm sorry. There was no attempt by me to propagandize. I am constrained, as I'm sure all of you know, by the environment in which I work—that's a bureaucratic environment. I was allowed last week—well, the individuals who said that might not like it, the bureaucratic environment in the best sense of the word. In other words, it's a structured formal envi-

ronment. I asked that that background data be made available to Mr. Jernigan as soon as possible. That data was developed, typed, and ready, if you would, on the 25th of April. Last week I received permission to send that to Mr. Jernigan. And I sent a copy, a Braille copy, a cassette copy, and a print copy, to Mr. Jernigan, to Jim Gashel, and to Florence Grannis. And in that letter I indicated that I would have other copies here. I am delighted to know that Mr. Jernigan suggested that you get them. I indicated that I would distribute them. But I didn't distribute them willy-nilly. I had two specific requests, comments about the testimony. I suspected that I would, because it ran in the MONITOR and I think it should have run in the MONITOR. And when those people came and asked about it, I did give them a copy. I haven't given out any others. I don't have an unlimited supply. I have five copies in my bag that I'd be delighted to give Mr. Jernigan for his use, if he would like, or to give to five individuals, whatever you think is expeditious. But please believe me that there was no attempt to propagandize, none whatsoever. It was that if you were interested and you asked, it was an informative brochure.

I think that that and the one point that you made about the blind and the physically handicapped and the statement that I made at a conference. Let me make the statement again and make it in the best way. The library program for the blind and the physically handicapped located in the Library of Congress was originally established for the adult blind. It was then changed to include the adult and juvenile blind; it was then changed—I am not going into all the details—over a period of time to include the adult and juvenile blind and the physically handicapped community in the United States of America. We estimate, I won't say conserv-

atively—but we estimate that there are approximately 7,000,000 people who are theoretically eligible for that program. We know that there are approximately 400,000—we know exactly how many, but I'm using a round figure now—using the program today. And we know that about 90 percent of them are blind or visually handicapped individuals, not physically handicapped individuals. What I said was that as the legislation stands, making the program open to blind and physically handicapped, that of the number potentially possible users of the program, there would be more physically handicapped. But the physically handicapped community is not as well organized as the blind community, for one point. We made that last year. When I come to you as the National Federation of the Blind, I come to an organization representing approximately, I believe your figure, Mr. Jernigan, is 50,000 individuals. And I understand that. There is no comparable group. This will be years, and years, and years away. Now, what is our main effort? Our main effort is to produce library materials, books, in either Braille or recorded format, and the law specifically says Braille or recorded format, for those people to use. We project no swerving away from continuing to produce in Braille or on record. Now when I say record, it could be in cassette or track ¹⁵/₁₆, it could be in two track ¹⁷/₈, it could be flexible discs, it could be hard discs; in other words, the recorded and the Braille are with us. Now, in addition to that, as far as the projected books went, we wanted to experiment with a medium to see if there was something that would be useful to the physically handicapped individual who had vision but did not have the use of his arms. We expended a very small amount, if you look at the total number of dollars what went into it, two

years ago we spent \$57,065. This year we spent \$85,000 on this program to develop a prototype. We don't have the authority to produce it. If we develop the best machine in the world, we would have to have a law changed in order to produce it and distribute it. At that point, the blind community, I assume, would be interested in having input into the Congress of the United States to comment there. And it would be changed or not be changed. But I assure you that there was no intention at any point in going into production of these units for the physically handicapped individuals. I would be glad to respond to any specific questions, Mr. Jernigan.

President JERNIGAN. Mr. Cylke I think that fairly soon we are going to need to take what time we can to get some questions from the audience. We may break, oh, it may be as much as five or ten minutes from now—we'll take that much time, but we'll break soon . . . and I would say if need be, let's find a time later in the week, because I think all of us should hear these questions, as much as we can. [Applause] That doesn't mean that somebody shouldn't go see Mr. Cylke, too. I don't mean that—but if we need to. Anybody want to put questions to Mr. Cylke?

James GASHEL. Yes, thank you Mr. President. Mr. Cylke, I just feel that we haven't adequately pursued the business about the blind and physically handicapped. In the handout that you have, you say that a recent study conducted by the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, has identified a target population of approximately 7.6 million individuals unable to use print books. Now, of these approximately 1.3 million are blind or visually handicapped; 6.3 million having other disabilities. Now, we went into this business of the blind and the physically handicapped recognizing

a good many of the implications. First, we had to head off what may seem to be a symbolic business, you know, we had to head off having the Braille shifted from the top side of the record to the flip side of the record. Now we are working to stem the tide on these projected books. Who knows what kind of a tide we are going to have to work to stem tomorrow? It may be large print books or some other type of production that somebody will think up. Somebody told me at this Convention that you said to them with respect to one library located in an agency for the blind, that that library didn't particularly give much service to the physically handicapped and that one would wonder if it should be in an agency for the blind. I don't know whether you said that or not but that's what was reported to me. If that's the case, are we going to have to stem off the tide of having libraries separated from agencies for the blind, and what other kinds of things are we going to have to deal with coming down the line? If you would like to comment—

Mr. CYLKE. Yes, I would, Jim. The statistics that we — that I referred to — we made available to the field, to the network, but I'll make sure that you get a copy next week first thing. The figures are there. What I'm saying today, and what I've said in the past on public occasions, while the figures show that theoretically there is a larger group of physically handicapped than visually handicapped potentially eligible for the program, I do not project a turn around in the program in the immediate future or even in the near future. The second point that I would like to talk to is the projected books. As I pointed out this morning, we do not have the legislative authority to produce and distribute those projected books. We don't have it and it would require a law change in order to get it. The project—and

I'm not trying to get out of anything by saying this—was initiated prior to my arrival at the division, was to explore to see if there was, indeed, an alternate medium which could be useful to physically handicapped persons who had vision but could not hold a print book and we would be delighted to discuss that in an appropriate technical meeting or in person or whatever. But there was not an attempt, or an implication even, that these machines would be produced or distributed in any mass way prior to a law change. And as I pointed out, at that point the whole community becomes involved. I am sure that the National Federation holds strong views in changing the laws so that it would permit that and would make their views quite clear.

President JERNIGAN. All right. Muzzy Marcelino.

Mr. MARCELINO. Mr. Cylke, as a professional librarian are you really satisfied with the titles that you are turning out in Braille? [Applause]

Mr. CYLKE. No, absolutely not.

Mr. MARCELINO. Then why do you do it and why have you done it for so long? Why have you not come to us to help you get more money to turn out decent lists of titles put out in Braille? [Applause] Now, do you intend to phase out Braille? . . . But I tell you I'm concerned about what's not being turned out in Braille. Now blind people do not see the lists of books that are being turned out in print. I spoke about this at the last Convention and asked that you finance in part books that are being turned out in print, to put in the MONITOR to tell blind people what's coming out in print. You wrote back that you didn't have enough money. But I notice that you haven't asked for money for this, and blind people have a problem knowing what to ask for to read in Braille, or in

talking books or cassette. We don't know what's coming out in print—this would be a very useful service.

Mr. CYLKE. Number one. We are in the business of producing books in Braille. As far as I can tell, we will always be in the business of producing books in Braille. [Applause] I would like to read for you from our formal request to Congress for increase in funds. It is now a public document. Books in raised characters. An increase of \$332,000 from \$960,700 to \$1,292,700. The very brief justification in that budget is this: The cost of producing Braille reading material continues to rise. Labor costs are reflected. The minimum wage has gone up 25 percent. Braille paper costs have increased 100 percent. We require this additional material just to stay even but that's almost a 30 percent increase. Now, last year—I cannot solicit your support—but last year at this Convention a resolution was passed supporting our requests for increased monies for Braille and I assure you that that resolution was very effectively used within the bureaucratic structure to allow me to get that 30 percent. Now let's have Dick Evenson, he's our Braille expert, make a few other comments.

Mr. EVENSON. . . . With respect to Braille titles, I am glad to announce that even in the tables as distributed, we have a change, the kind of change we are glad to announce. As of Friday, June 27, there were 297 Braille titles authorized. That is three short of 300 and to do that we spent well over \$600,000 for the current year. In other words, we felt very strongly that where in previous years with lack of money we weren't able to produce 250-275 of those titles we have now gone to just about 300 titles. Let me also point out that we agree with you that it's been a problem in producing enough titles even above that 300. We've

already taken the first step in taking recently produced volunteer master copies and making thermoform copies of that for wider distribution. Our problem has been that with only one copy of a particular Braille issue, I believe it is the same copy that the fine Iowa library has had, when you serve 50 or 75 people with a title. We are now making at least four copies of any volunteer produced master, as far as our money will allow us to do. So we're indeed, whereas up until recently we've done a lot of planning, and studying, and surveying, and looking at our costs and taking some holding actions such as keeping the magazine ceilings on the Braille magazines, we've now begun to take that money and spend it in such a way that will produce extra copies.

Mrs. AMMETER. Mr. Cylke, at last year's Convention we passed a resolution asking that the library not decrease but do everything it could to increase the amount of Braille materials, but as I listen to you today, it sounds as though the Braille-reading blind library user is getting to be a smaller and smaller minority in the overall program which you have. I would just like to have your comment. I believe that even though we are a minority we should have the same right as any other consumer, sighted, blind or physically handicapped to have library materials available to us and if those materials need to have funding, we should do everything possible to get the funding so that blind people who use Braille don't have to be left out of the program. [Cries of "hear, hear," and applause]

Mr. CYLKE. I concur. I can say nothing to you but that I concur. I believe that when in asking for a \$300,000 increase in a \$900,000 plus budget item, I have indicated the good faith to increase by more than 30 percent and we would love to have it increased by thousands of percents. But, again,

we have the problem of producing a balanced, if you will, budget document. NFB has the right, the moral right, and every other right to examine that, and if they don't like it, they have their obligation to go and try to get that changed. I think that working together within the Library of Congress and NFB working in their own way outside, we can achieve this. Thirty percent in one year is a pretty healthy increase. Let me talk about the general budget for this year and maybe this will help a bit.

President JERNIGAN. Mr. Cylke, excuse me. Thirty percent is, indeed, a good chunk but if Braille production costs have gone up 55 percent and if you ask for a 30 percent increase, that's a problem—

Mr. CYLKE. Right.

President JERNIGAN. . . . and certainly we aren't getting any increase in titles. [Applause] I said what we fought for.

Mr. CYLKE. Let me just make one point, generally. And I would be again delighted to talk specifically later because it is a public document now; it was not when we talked the last time.

In previous years in the Library of Congress, the largest budget increase for the Division for the Blind was \$1,000,000—the largest increase. This year we requested an increase of \$4,800,000. All right? One million was the largest before; \$4,800,000 we requested this year. We certainly would have loved to increase that more but if you understand the budget process and the process of going for money—well, we think, we hope, that Congress will give us that amount of money. That decision is not finally made yet. And we appreciated the NFB's participation. Mr. Jernigan said some very kind, and thoughtful things in his testimony and I think that will help us get that \$4,800,000. I would like to think that it wasn't Kurt Cylke, that it wasn't the Divi-

sion for the Blind, that it wasn't the Library of Congress, but it was all those people plus, and possibly even much more important, the membership of the National Federation of the Blind who through their astute leadership, who understood and supported without solicitation, without anything. In other words, we are going to have almost five times the largest increase, hopefully for this coming year. And in the years ahead, hopefully, it will be equally high and equally as productive.

President JERNIGAN. Let me say a word to Mr. Cylke in conclusion. Mr. Cylke, we have had today what I hope will be meaningful dialogue to us and to you. You did not comment upon your choice to go to the ACB convention. I believe, in all candor, it was an expensive choice on your part. I don't expect you to say that you agree with that. I believe it was expensive because I believe that it shakes the faith of the blind of this organization in your understandings of the verities of life. Beyond all of that, let me say that we will support you when we think you are right, and we think that you are right very often. As a matter of fact you have done, we think, a much more creditable job than your predecessor. When we think you are wrong we will oppose you. We think you have done a number of things that are wrong. When we think that you are wrong enough, then we will oppose you quite vigorously; but as it stands, as far as I am concerned, there is more on the plus than on the minus side, in the administration. We appreciate your coming and talking with us directly and openly. We hope that you are willing that we should have talked with you directly and openly. We bear you nothing but good will personally and we thank you for coming. [Loud applause]

Mr. CYLKE. Thank you, Mr. Jernigan. Your comments are appreciated and I think

that they are very, very fair. When I'm right, I would appreciate your support. In your view when I'm wrong, I will accept your criticism. Hopefully we can build and learn to work together even more closely in the future. Thank you.

[After the opening ceremonies on Wednesday morning, President Jernigan made the following statement.]

President JERNIGAN. I want to clear up one matter from late yesterday afternoon. I had one delegation raise with me the question as to what kind of policy emerges from our dialogue and discussion with Mr. Cylke yesterday afternoon. There should be no mistake about what was concluded and what was said. The question was: Does this mean that we are at war with the Library of Congress? My answer to that would be that I certainly hope not, but, my answer to that also is, as I tried to indicate yesterday afternoon, I think wars occur mostly when people misunderstand and misjudge each other; that is, if we misunderstand Mr. Cylke or if he misunderstands us. Somebody said that Mr. Cylke really thinks he is strong enough that it doesn't matter what we think. I said, I hope not, and I don't believe that's the case. On the other hand, I don't think we want to misunderstand the cost to us in conflict. It doesn't make sense. My notion of where our policy lies is this: I think Mr. Cylke did not respond thoroughly to some of the things we talked about yesterday afternoon. I suspect that he thinks that he did. So, that's the way people are. People differ on that. I don't know that he could have made response at that stage that would have been thoroughly satisfactory to us and I doubt that we could have made any commentary to him about our concerns that would have been thoroughly satisfactory to him. That's part of the problem. But I would say this: I

will attempt, as the elected leader of this organization, to work cooperatively with Mr. Cylke, try to be reasonably long-suffering and patient, try to give input, not be demanding; but on the other hand, as I indicated yesterday afternoon, if Mr. Cylke goes through the forms of asking us for recommendations and nothing ever comes as a result of those, then there will come a time when we will have nothing to lose whatever and we will then take our story to Congress and undertake to see if we can get redress of problems there. We have the capacity to do that, the power to do it, and the will to do it if we have to. [Applause] We will also, if necessary, take our story to the press, to the administrative officials of government. I realize the cost involved in that, but I also realize that there are times when not to act is more costly than to act. So I'd say that where we come down to is this: What was said yesterday afternoon, was meant to be a clear indication that we intend to try to behave with restraint and with responsibility and with good will. But we also intend to behave with firmness, with determination, and with unshakable intention to go forward to advance our goals. I think it's that clear. That's the way I see what was said yesterday afternoon and the relationship to the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in the Library of Congress. It does not mean any kind of declaration of war, or anything else. I don't think that Mr. Cylke understood it to mean that. I certainly didn't understand it to mean that, nor did it mean that we were simply going to have a nice dialogue where everyone vents his feelings and then goes away and forgets it. We're not going to do that either. So, that's what I see as coming out of yesterday afternoon and I think it's well to say that, to put it into the record and have it understood.

THE AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND: A LOOK AHEAD

BY
LOYAL EUGENE APPLE

President JERNIGAN. Many things have happened during the past year. You heard reports on a number of them yesterday afternoon. The visible manifestation of another of them is here today, in that there has been a change in the directorate of the American Foundation for the Blind. Mr. Apple is a man I have known for quite some time; as a matter of fact, in the long ago when NAC was aforming, Mr. Apple and I met at a sub-sub-committee level or some such dealing with NAC matters. When he came to be Director of the Foundation, I suggested to him that we'd like to hear from him at this Convention and he said, "Well, you know there are many things that I probably won't be fully familiar with at that time. Perhaps it would be better to wait another year." And I said to him, "Not really, because the thing that the people of the Federation probably would be most interested in knowing you'll be able to tell even before you go to the Foundation, that is, the Foundation in the past has been unresponsive to consumers. The Foundation in the past has been repressive in its dealings with the blind as far as we're concerned. It set up NAC. What the blind of this movement will really want to know is whether the Foundation under your leadership is going to work in partnership with consumers or whether it is not. Whether it is going to give only lip service to that concept or not even that; or whether it will be a meaningful reality. Your coming to the Convention can serve either as the reassurance or as the nonreassurance along those lines and I would urge you to come." He said that he would come and he did. He is here. I want to present to you at this time the Executive Director of the American

Foundation for the Blind, Mr. Loyal Eugene Apple, to talk with you about the Foundation and a look ahead. Mr. Apple. [Polite applause]

Mr. APPLE. Mr. Jernigan, officers, members, and fellow guests. In 1940 Jacobus tenBroek founded this organization and the 35th anniversary finds your membership, resources, and opportunities unequal to anything else you have had in the past. Certainly this is the work of many hands and the drive and zeal of your members has resulted in this present strength and visibility. It is a pleasure for me to be with you and it is a pleasure for me to be back in Chicago.

For those of you who don't know my background, I was Chief of the Blind Rehabilitation Center for the Veterans Administration for seven years, from 1960 until 1967. I come from 18 years of work in direct service with blind persons to be at the Foundation. Much professional experience has certain basic things to it. I believe very strongly in service. I believe very strongly in the training of professionals, and I believe very strongly in applied research. I view these as the building blocks of good service programming. I think they're like the links of a chain. If you train the people to give service, then you aid the blind person in solving many of the problems of blindness. I came to the Foundation on January 15 of this year, and that date will live in my memory also from another standpoint, because it is either the height of the inflation or the depths of the depression. I'm not sure which. During that time I have been trying to, as Mr. Jernigan said, get my feet on the ground and to get some understanding of the

complex organization that is the American Foundation for the Blind.

I would like to give my interpretation of AFB because it gives you some framework in which to view my remarks as they come up later. In 1919 the American Association of Instructors for the Blind passed a resolution favoring an organization that sounded something like AFB. The following year the American Association of Workers for the Blind passed a resolution which was more central to AFB, and the year after that a gift from M. C. Migel allowed what was then called the American Institute to incorporate. The purposes of having such an organization was to get at the kind of things individuals or agencies could not get at by themselves in the course of ordinary day-to-day activity, things at the national level.

AFB was set up to gather information, to serve as a gathering place, to do research and development on techniques that would break open new areas and support education and employment of blind persons in the United States. It was to be an instrument for the improvement of the lives of blind persons through its functioning as a resource to the field and by giving indirect service at the national level. There's only a couple of things that we do that might be considered direct service. The aids and appliances program which you are familiar with, an \$800,000 a year gross business. It's a break-even program, but we're lucky if it's break-even. I think if you're interested in going into aids and appliances business I think we would give you support and would encourage you to do so, because I think you have an additional service. There's plenty of room in the field.

The talking book program, of course, you are familiar with. Library of Congress has converted to thin discs and to cassette tapes and we've not made that conversion.

If the private entrepreneur can supply the quality and the cassettes, I doubt that we'll get into it; but if it appears that the quality is difficult to maintain any other way, then we probably would consider moving in that direction.

In terms of other things that we are interested in, let me say that there are some fine opportunities available today and some needs that are obvious in terms of unserved populations. And there are some unique hurdles in achieving these needs. I might mention a few, not that these represent the universe of what blind people need, but focusing primarily on things which have to do with people who are not getting service or the kind of service which might be indicated. First there is the aging blind person. We've heard the figure that half of the blind population is over the age of 65, and I heard a figure the other day that 70 percent were over the age of 55. The secretary who types the notes is a lady of 65 and the wording was "elderly blind persons 55 years or older constitute 70 percent of the blind population" and she choked on the figure and went back and read it twice before she typed it because it did seem so large. There are new laws that make possible service programs to citizens of this country, elderly citizens of this country, and I suppose that blind persons will be able to take advantage of those. I am concerned that while many elderly blind citizens do live happy, and healthy, and active lives, that there are many who are suffering the privations of isolation and loneliness and health problems and loss of income similar to sighted citizens and I would like to see them get the services. Too frequently we hear of inappropriate institutionalizations where the blind person is institutionalized because neither he nor his family know the things that they need to know to cope with the effects of sight loss. Many times these things are

quite simple: learning how to prepare a meal or to shop or to take medication or to get to the right place to get the income that they need. So we're interested in that area.

In another direction, we are interested in the low vision population. Eighty percent, it is estimated, of the legally blind population of the country has usable vision and here, again, all too frequently, persons lose their jobs and move into this category before they ever receive low vision services that might have kept them on their jobs in the first place. So I think that in terms of people's employment, maintaining people on the job, that we need better services and we need those services delivered more quickly. We may need the support of labor unions in carrying this through.

Our third great area of need and concern is that of consumer participation, the advocacy, and a meaning outside which is unique—outside—substantially more alive than what you'd find in the law libraries. This has not been easy for you. It's taken the resources and effort of all of you to make consumer participation work in the places where you have. And, of course, neither has it been easy for agency management or staff to work out the complex new relationships that evolve when you have an active consumer participation program. I think it's fairly evident, if you are a student of the times, that meaningful social action in this day and age is going to involve, going to have to involve, broader and broader populations of consumer participation in order to be effective.

Another area, and an area in which I know that I see from your program that you have an interest, is that of technological application. I think this country has a huge complex of technological resources that have not been utilized for blind persons. I think that we need a national commitment to the

solution of some of the problems of sight loss and employment through the application of technological development. There are some areas that are very close and there are other areas that are further away from us and I think that we have only begun to scratch the surface. I think that devices that have in terms of sophistication of a NASA space flight, things that we have are very primitive today. But there are some neat things around the corner. I hope that we can see some better application of some technology to the middle range of Braille to solve some of these problems of production that Mr. Cylke was talking about. We are really very close to the doorstep and maybe it's on the doorstep to have a pocket calculator for blind persons that really works, that gives you a Braille output or a spoken output. I think the reading machine business is progressing and that we are close to having a reading machine that really talks and gets the sound through. There are other things but I mention those four or five to give you a notion of things. There are other areas such as services to blind children and their families; employment; multiply handicapped—the needs expressed in our time.

Now our hurdles. You would expect that I would have mentioned the economic hurdle first. The times are difficult for fundraising, as I see that you have experienced. You're whipsawed by the loss of income and at the same time by rising costs, and I expect that it would be occurring in private agencies serving blind persons throughout the United States. To complicate the matter, the Congress is showing a tendency to want to plug tax loopholes and one of the things they are looking at is the deduction for the charitable gift.

Talking about Congress, there's a third thing that's in the air that will call for some effort, perhaps, and it is that other disability

groups and groups dealing with other disabilities are better organized than in the past and there does seem to be a mood in Congress to deal with people in groups or in cooperative situations where they can agree on legislative goals. The other thing that concerns me is that when I entered the field in 1957, there was quite a lot to do about the growth of the umbrella agency or the general rehab agency. I see that it's back again. The umbrella agency is ebbing and flowing at the state level which makes it a somewhat difficult level for us to deal with but, perhaps, not for you. I see that any agency that's going to render reasonable services for blind persons needs a degree of technical and administrative autonomy in order to carry that out. I see the umbrella agencies as a real threat to [applause] the more subtle and all-pervasive thing of accountability, meaning the measurement of effectiveness, which came out of industry, and cost effectiveness and the factor in efficiency experts in the military, has come over into the government agencies; and like them, the Foundation will do more and more to measure its own effectiveness in the future. I think it will hit all of us. Part of the conflict with NAC is that there's some disagreement as to what is an effective standard for services. Do the end results justify the accountability measures that have been taken. The impact, the measurement of effectiveness. I will focus primarily on the service area. Does the Foundation, doing what it does, have a service impact in terms of benefiting blind persons?

In terms of my relationship with you, we can operate in the same way, that is, are there things that we can work on together that will make for the maximum impact? There may be things that we work on singly that will have the maximum impact. As I wrote these words down, and I was doing my

homework before coming here, I found out that Jacobus tenBroek had given such a motion at one point in a speech. But I think really, in terms of all that we do, the final service impact in terms of improved lives for blind persons is what it's all about. And that's the way that we will be measured finally. Thank you. [Applause]

President JERNIGAN. Thank you very much, Mr. Apple. We will take a little time for questioning. I have one question to raise with you and then we will take questions from the audience.

Mr. Apple, as I indicated in my introductory remarks, our concern with the Foundation in the final analysis is its impact upon the lives of blind people. We think, I believe, that the Foundation has done a number of good things. That is, it has provided research in a number of areas, talking book machines and others, that it has done some coordination that is worthwhile in the field, but we also feel that the Foundation has done some things which I suppose the only way to say it is that they have hurt the lives of blind people. I suppose two of those really tie in together. One, production of such sterling pieces of work as the 239-page "Step by Step Guide for Blind Persons," [applause] and similar pieces of documentation which, though they may help the Foundation raise money, harm our lives proportionately by what they do to our image, and second, the fact that the Foundation created and continues to sponsor NAC. Our quarrel, as we have said before, is not with accreditation. That's simply a smoke screen. I think the Foundation has known that. We are not opposed to standards that will improve agencies. In fact, the contrary. Our opinion has been that the NAC standards are mostly Mickey Mouse, and when they're not Mickey Mouse they are so stated and so couched that they don't do any-

thing to improve agencies and beyond that they have a positively bad effect in terms of what they bring out in the end product. That is, by holding an agency out to the public as performing a quality service when that agency is not performing a quality service, those standards hurt blind people. [Applause] I, therefore, with that as a background, would like to put this question to you: My understanding is that at a recent meeting, Miss Jessamine Cobb, who is your representative in this area and who is present this morning, was asked the question about NAC-accredited agencies and that she said that you could divide all agencies in the country into three categories and that the best ones were those which were NAC-accredited [protests from the audience]—yes, I know that's ridiculous; and that the second best ones were those that were about to become or were trying to become NAC-accredited, and then there were all the others. [Laughter] That's truly an astounding statement. I would like to ask you what your reaction is to this particular commentary and what you can tell us as to what the Foundation's future relationship with NAC, particularly with respect to funding and publicizing, will be.

Mr. APPLE. Mr. Jernigan, I have an answer and it is this: That I followed from the sidelines for the past several years, the activities regarding NAC and with great interest. I followed whatever scraps, bits, and pieces came through at meetings and things like that. I think that your concern has been, to some extent at least, with the leadership of the two organizations and their ability to respond to you. From the standpoint that I am new at the Foundation, and Mr. Bleecker is new with respect to his leadership role with NAC, to that extent I would say "new ball game," and I would like to see you folks review us from that standpoint. For the rest of it, my homework tells me

that it is a very complex issue and I am going to ask that you give me no more questions on NAC because I am simply not in a position nor do I have enough information to give you a proper response, and I won't do it.

President JERNIGAN. OK. As I understand what Mr. Apple says, he refuses to discuss NAC with us further, is that correct?

Mr. APPLE. That's correct.

President JERNIGAN. Then we will give you no further questions on anything else. That's fine. [Loud applause and cheers of approval] Look, I would only say this to you, Mr. Apple. It is, indeed, a new ball game with respect to you. It is not with respect to Mr. Bleecker. [Applause] I would have hoped—we will respect your wish, you will receive no further questions—but I would have hoped that you would have been able to discuss with us at least some detail about your own personal opinion or your own personal wishes or view or what we might expect, at least, as to investigating certain situations. However, I can understand if you do not wish to do that. I think that it is reasonable, however, to say this: A director of an organization or a president of an organization, it seems to me, cannot avoid the responsibilities of that position. A President of the United States, when he comes into office, the next day must deal with foreign policy matters. It will not do if he waits a year, or two years, or three. [Loud applause and cheers] What I would say to you is this: That when representatives of the Foundation go around the country and say that all agencies can be divided into three groups and of those groups, the best ones are NAC accredited, and when the experience of the blind would indicate clearly that those are probably the worst agencies for giving services, [applause] then I can only say to you that we do hope that the Foundation

will work with us. In the final analysis what the Foundation may do in research, what it may do in the way of public pronouncements about the image of blindness, or anything else, all of that is really sort of dwarfed by the overall question which we'd like you to deal with, and that is the question of what the Foundation will do with what we regard as the greatest threat to good services to blind persons in the country. You, of course, are free to do what you will on this, whether to respond or not—I would hope that you would be in a position to at least tell us that one day, if not now, then next year or some time, you will give us an answer as to what the Foundation's relationship with NAC will be? Would you be in a position to do that next year, and if not next, would there ever come a time when you would give us an answer? That's a fair question. You say you can't now. Surely that's reasonable. Will the time come when you will straightforwardly tell us what you will do with respect to NAC?

Mr. APPLE. I think that in what I do there will be information, acquisition, and study. You can expect that.

President JERNIGAN. Right.

Mr. APPLE. I would expect that out of that to have a position develop and that one will.

President JERNIGAN. But you think that the day may come, or you think it will come when you'll tell us something about what you will do with respect to NAC. I'm not asking what your position is now or any question about that but just if there will ever come a time when you will discuss NAC with us.

Mr. APPLE. I discussed NAC.

President JERNIGAN. Well, I know, but

you won't take questions and you won't discuss it or say what your position is going to be. Will there come a time when you will tell us what the Foundation's position is going to be concerning NAC?

Mr. APPLE. As the major issue in the field, I suppose that if it appears necessary, I will.

President JERNIGAN. From our point of view it's desirable. We can't make you do it. Would you think that you could do that by a year from now? I'm not suggesting that you have to confront this audience or anything. Do you think you could give us a written statement, answer questions by mail or something. The Foundation, after all, is a large organization in the field. This, at least to the largest organization of consumers in the field, seems to be the most vital question we face. Surely it's not unreasonable to ask you, after you take all the time you feel you need for deliberation, to deal directly and forthrightfully with the question we might ask on it. Is that reasonable?

Mr. APPLE. Mr. Jernigan, you know me and well, I'm not saying anything. . . . I asked for no more questions on it.

President JERNIGAN. Do you want me to withdraw that?

Mr. APPLE. Please.

President JERNIGAN. He's not prepared to tell us whether he will ever tell us anything about NAC. That's all right if he chooses to do that, that's fine. The record is clear on it. Thank you very much Mr. Apple. He has a right to his views, even if we disagree with those views. Thank you very much Mr. Apple. We're glad you came and talked with us and we will duly report the conversation.

ADDRESS TO THE CONVENTION

BY

STEVEN TEICHNER

*on behalf of**Daniel Walker, Governor, State of Illinois*

It is fitting, perhaps ironic, that your organization has chosen to hold its 35th Annual Convention during our Bicentennial week. If one examines the history of the National Federation of the Blind, one is immediately struck by the parallels between your group and the citizens of the Nation 200 years ago. They banded together to be able to insure their rightful place as individuals. You have banded together for the same reason. Two hundred years ago the watchword was dignity, the issue was freedom of choice. Today for your membership it is the same. There are some who have called your organization strident, a phrase that was also applied to the Adamses, the Hancocks, and the Henrys 200 years ago.

It is not my intention to use today's forum as an opportunity to speak at length about the Bicentennial. I am struck, however, by one additional and potentially most significant parallel between your organization and the events that surrounded this Nation 200 years ago. If one examines closely the causes of the revolution one cannot help but be struck by the overriding fact that there was a lack of communication between the colonists and the king and his government 6,000 miles apart. A similar distance, at least symbolically, separates the blind from those who would seek to work with them. Services to you and those you represent have been shrouded in a myth of paternalism. That a public official can come and stand before you and make an admission of failure to this degree, is an indication that your organization has not worked in vain. You, and it has been your initiative, have worked tire-

lessly over the years to close that symbolic ocean that separated you from those in government. Your task is not yet complete. I would be less than truthful were I to say that it were. However, the consciousness-raising you have done, the lobbying, the criticizing have not been in vain.

I come to you today as a public official who hopefully is representative of public officials around this Nation. It is not my intention to apologize for inaction in the past, nor wave a magic wand by saying a few words in promising a better future. You have been engaged far too long in the nitty-gritty of trying to accomplish your goals. As a result of this, rhetoric has no place in what I say to you. You have asked specific questions on a regular basis. Let me attempt in the next few moments to answer two questions with specific answers.

You have asked why are we, the blind, and the other physically handicapped people, discriminated against by both the public and private sector? Why are we unable to get jobs? Why are we unable to get housing? The answer to this is simple. Discrimination has been allowed to exist due to the insensitivity and lack of concern by the general population as a whole or a part of that population. The State of Illinois is committed to insure that discrimination in any form is not tolerated. Discrimination based on some physical handicap is just as insidious as discrimination based on race, color, creed, or sex. Where there are laws that authorize such discrimination in employment, or housing, or education, they must be removed. Where there are practices in the

private sector that deny rights and opportunities to a person because that individual has a handicap, those practices must be stopped. The State of Illinois cannot and will not tolerate the continuation of discrimination in any form. The State of Illinois will move affirmatively to remove that discrimination and, where appropriate, to proceed against individuals who continue to discriminate. Presently on the Governor's desk is House Bill 250, awaiting his action. This legislation would provide the State's Fair Employment Practices Commission with jurisdiction to move against discrimination against handicapped individuals in employment. The Governor is reviewing that legislation in light of the general policy and philosophy that is encompassed in the statement that I have just made. It is anticipated that his decision on that piece of legislation will be announced in the very near future.

You have also asked why are those who are paid out of our tax dollars unwilling to take your advice or even listen to you as they devise service programs for you. You have asked why is it that there is no continuity of programs. Why do things start and stop? Why is money invested in program demonstration and not in program services. The answer to that also is unfortunately simple. People in government are like people anywhere. They aren't sure that what they're doing is right. [Applause] They aren't sure that what they're doing will accomplish its goal. This has led to constant experimentation. This has led to the lack of continuity that you refer to. It has also led to a lack of accountability. The continuation of this process has rested on the principle that there is no one person, no one organization that can speak authoritatively on the needs of any group. While we in government need as much input as possible, while we in government would be shirking our re-

sponsibility, were we not to listen to as many voices as possible, we have begun to recognize that groups like the National Federation of the Blind are effective spokesmen for their members. [Applause] Effective and, let me add and emphasize, legitimate spokesmen. [Applause] We are desirous, in fact we plead with you, work with us to insure that an active and integral part of any service delivery program is a give and take, a back and forth. In the past I am sure your group, both here and around this Nation, has found doors closed to it. There has been a reluctance on the part of public officials to deal openly with you as partners in order to achieve the maximum amount of services possible for those you represent. It is my hope that we in Illinois have begun the task of opening those doors. Representatives of the Illinois Federation of the Blind have already begun to work with us in government to pull together an agenda for the handicapped. This agenda will recognize that not all the needs of all the handicapped individuals are the same. [Cheers and applause] It will contain short-range goals. It will contain long-range goals. It will be a document of accountability for the blind and for the other handicapped citizens of this state. I urge you who come from other states to work with your elected officials to develop an agenda for your states.

In these few moments, I have attempted to answer two specific questions. Not all of the questions, but clearly fundamental questions. In the future I expect that in Illinois we will move on to answer even more questions.

A few years ago at a national convention like this one, your President, Kenneth Jernigan, made an impassioned and eloquent plea, and I quote:

"To win through to success will require all that we have in the way of purpose, dedi-

cation, loyalty, good sense, and guts. Above all, we need front line soldiers who are willing to make sacrifices and work for the cause. Therefore, I ask you again today, will you join me on the barricades?"

To him and to you I say yes, we are prepared to join with you to work in a spirit of cooperation, not cooptation. I remain convinced that if we jointly attack that barricade, then our goal can soon be to remove it, not defend it.

Thank you. [Applause]

President JERNIGAN. Mr. Teichner, we appreciate your coming here and bringing us the Governor's message. We wish you, if you will, to take back to the Governor a message from us and that message, I think, would be this: The statements that have been made certainly form not only a useful but a constructive foundation upon which to build. However, they will be nothing but the usual promises and empty platitudes unless upon that foundation should rise a structure of concrete, tangible accomplishment. What I am getting at is this: In Illinois you have a number of public agencies directly involved in work with the blind that are unresponsive to the needs of consumers, [applause and cheers] who will not listen to us even though democratically we were elected to represent the blind and although we have right here in this room close to 100 delegates from throughout the State of Illinois representing the blind. As a matter of fact, the Governor's Office at times, and it's understandable as we're trying to gain visibility, has been relatively uninformed. I am reminded of the time, not too awfully long ago, when the Governor was asked to make a proclamation about White Cane Week and could find nothing better to do than to talk about the Polish-American Legion in it and their work with blind persons, which, instead of helping with respect to Polish citizens

created much unhumorous laughter throughout the Nation. In other words, we take it as a compliment and also as very constructive evidence of a wish to work with the blind, that you are here. We welcome you and are pleased that you came. We hope that resulting from this will be a heightened sensitivity on the part of the Governor's Office to the wishes of the blind themselves and a differentiation between the blind and the agencies that are established by state government to serve the blind. They are not the same and their interests are not always identical and sometimes the one will not listen at all to the other. [Applause] You may want to respond to that.

Mr. TEICHNER. If I can just briefly respond to it. I think that one of the things that has come clear, and we have just recently begun to work on the agenda for the handicapped for the State of Illinois, has been the implicit recognition by the Governor, because this agenda is being developed at his request by consumer groups throughout the State, not by the agencies and not by support groups, but by the consumer groups, that the problems that you articulate we acknowledge to have existed and our hope would be, that through the agenda and through the conference, the agency people will receive the message loud and clear from the Governor, that the process of formulation of policy that had existed in the past is not the process that will be followed in the future. [Applause] I want to say just one last thing, and that is that if I were you, and were to hear me say what I just said, as well as the remarks, I would be somewhat cynical, because I am sure that elected officials and representatives of elected officials have made very similar statements. What I am saying to you, recognizing that, is that we are prepared to be judged specifically and to be held completely accountable for promises

we make today, the programs that we work to develop in the future, and even for some of the faults we have committed in the past. Thank you very much. [Applause]

President JERNIGAN. No, we don't feel cynical about it. I am pleased that you came. Look, only the weak need feel cynical because they cannot follow up and make good on promises. We are not weak and we are not cynical. We believe the Governor is a man of good faith and good sense also. And we believe that we have emerged enough that it is practical for people in the State to pay attention to what we say. With respect to this, let me read to you a piece of information which has come to my hand which you might like to hear.

Mr. Teichner speaks of a committee which is working to try to meet the needs of the handicapped. Just for fun, I thought that you might like to hear a paragraph which was sent to the Governor's Office by a representative of the Committee on the Handicapped concerning the NFB of Illinois. It shows how we are evaluated. Some people upon reading this paragraph have said, "Well, that's an insult." Not at all. I regard it as highly complimentary. Read it and see what you think. This, remember, went to the Governor's Office, as, I assume, a confidential evaluation of our organization.

It is a long letter, and it evaluates all kinds of groups, from a member of the Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped advising them about how they ought to deal with things.

"National Federation of the Blind of Illinois, contact Avraham Rabby. . . . NFB-I is the most vocal, politically active, consumer group of all. [Applause] They always seem to accomplish their goals even if the mechanism is by embarrassment. [Laughter] Rami Rabby is a tough son-of-a-bitch." [Loud laughter, cheers, and applause]

President JERNIGAN. The strangest things do come into our hands, you see.

"He will nail an opponent to the wall if he has to. You can tell him I said so. He is highly critical and considers himself anti-establishment. He is hard to work with but you must do it. [Laughter] If you can co-opt him, you have 80 percent of the battle won."

President JERNIGAN. O. K. That's what they said. I think that's fine. [Cheers, laughter, applause] May all people feel toward us that way. [Laughter] Somebody surely said, it is not necessary to be loved but it is essential to be respected. [Applause]

Congressman O'BRIEN. Rami, I must say they didn't damn you with faint praise.

ASSISTIVE DEVICES AND/OR SPECIAL SERVICES FOR DISABLED EMPLOYEES

BY
MANUEL URENA

With accelerating rapidity other disabled Americans are becoming conscious of the virtue, indeed the necessity, of collective action. Contrary to common belief and conventional wisdom, the blind prove to be the pathfinders, and they provide the prototype. Inevitably, the pressures will mount favoring a grand alliance of the disabled; but if our

disabled friends truly learn about self-reliance and self-determination, they will make the careful distinction between common front and coalition. The impact of the organized disabled will affect the Federation in a number of areas; I am here today to discuss one of these ramifications.

The cumulating experience is bringing to

the disabled what the blind realized long ago; namely, that with a small adjustment here, or a piece of equipment there, the burdens of the disability are easily supportable and fall into the category of physical inconvenience. The matter of opening the doors to opportunity is another question altogether; for opportunity depends upon the willingness of society to welcome the disabled into shops, factories, offices—to the places where people gather and make decisions. It may be a relatively simple matter to universally agree that the disabled are first-class citizens too; but there may be differing views about the obligations of employers, government, and society at large to ensure these rights and make them a living reality. Oftentimes posing the question itself reflects a biased attitude; for example, should an employer do more for disabled employees? Is there an obligation for governmental agencies to spend more of the taxpayers' hard-earned dollars to provide equal opportunities for disabled individuals who wish to work?

Roughly stated, the following is the way the question was raised by one agency:

PROVISION OF SPECIAL ASSISTANCE TO EMPLOYEES WHO CANNOT TRAVEL INDEPENDENTLY AND/OR HANDLE CERTAIN OTHER ASPECTS OF THEIR JOBS. Although we provide special assistance to some disabled employees, we do not have a clearcut policy regarding the amount of equipment, staff time, and attendant care we will provide, and under what circumstances. Without such knowledge one cannot properly hire and place the disabled within our organization. It is recommended that we develop a policy of providing to the disabled whatever equipment, attendant care, extra clerical or other help that is necessary to handle the job.

There are conflicting views regarding the extent to which our organization should subsidize disabled employees. Are the obligations of government greater, lesser, or identical to the private sector? There are at least three possible approaches: (1) Provide special equipment, attendant care,

readers, drivers, interpreters, and special clerical assistance as necessary to assist disabled individuals in the performance of their jobs. (2) Provide special equipment as needed to make it possible for disabled employees to handle the duties of their jobs. However, ongoing expenses such as attendant care, drivers, and readers are the responsibility of the employee. (3) Expect all employees to provide whatever equipment or special assistance is necessary to perform the duties of the job to which they are assigned.

A discussion of the issues raised above deserved a detailed analysis which in itself could raise very provocative questions. The very phrasing of the issue is subject to reinterpretation for it reflects a biased attitude concerning the entire matter. For example, what exactly constitutes "provision of special assistance"? Presumably it would have something to do with numbers: There are large numbers of able-bodied employees and a very small number of disabled employees. Providing of a government or company car to an able-bodied employee—the majority—does not constitute "provision of special assistance." Providing a certain kind of chair for a paraplegic employee—the minority—does. Providing an office for a certain level of able-bodied employees, again, is not special assistance; while purchasing a slate and a stylus for a blind employee is looked upon as an extra expense. Perhaps if there were more disabled individuals working the issue would be viewed from a different perspective. Therefore, a suggestion would be to rephrase the proposition. Perhaps something along the line of, what are the obligations of an employer respecting the provision of assistance to enable employees to perform their jobs more efficiently? Viewed in this way, one inevitably returns to the basic issue of working conditions.

Before leaving this part of the discussion, it should be noted that the use of the word "subsidize" connotes a certain frame of mind. "There are conflicting views regard-

ing the extent to which our organization should subsidize disabled employees." If the prefix "dis" was removed from "able" it would be enlightening to discover whether the term "subsidize" would have been used with such casualness. Modern places of employment furnish for their employees everything from musak to coffee breaks, from air conditioning to the latest styles of carpeting. Yet, I dare say that few employers and/or employees would look upon these practices as subsidies to workers.

Another matter to be considered is relevance. Again, if an able-bodied employee needs better lighting or more storage space the expenditure involved is looked upon as job-related. These same items provided a disabled employee are not looked upon as additional expenses even though such items may be useless to him. For example, storage for print materials in many cases is inappropriate for Braille. The important fact here is that providing of basically impractical adjuncts would not be classified as special, while supplying appropriate materials—incidentally not always more expensive—would be regarded as extra. Therefore, relevance becomes crucial.

The entire cost factor leads one to ponder all sorts of matters. There would seem to be little virtue in all the architectural barrier and disabled advocacy noise only to refuse to provide a special desk. Equally, it would make little sense to worry about the relief rolls and attempts to rehabilitate welfare recipients, only to lock the door to employment at the last step by withholding tools for services that would ensure job proficiency. In theory, employers have had the insight, been persuaded, or coerced to provide an appropriate working environment—with all that it entails—on the premise that productivity would be significantly increased, and the burdens of society correspondingly

reduced. This theory is as valid today as ever; therefore, it should be applied in all cases.

It was this rationale that brought about universal public education in this country; and justified the taxation of the childless poor man to provide for the education of children of the wealthy individual. With the possible exception of a few persons, no one looks upon this development as "the provision of special assistance."

Let me say a word or two about another area in which proposals couched in phraseology of this nature anticipate a response. I refer to "employees who travel independently and/or handle other aspects of their jobs." Again, if the statement refers to the conventional wisdom, numbers would seem to be the basis of justification. On occasion throughout my working career, able-bodied colleagues have asked my help in dealing with Spanish-speaking individuals, or in translation of documents from Spanish to English. It is certainly conceivable that disabled employees with special skills or talents—legal, mathematical, scientific, clerical, or the like—have been approached for assistance by their able-bodied fellow workers. Certainly this request for aid by the able-bodied is not to be looked upon as an inability to "handle certain other aspects of their jobs." Because the assistance the disabled need is sometimes different, the notion of the inability to handle certain aspects of the job emerges.

Respecting the ability to travel independently, as the Indians are alleged to have said to Columbus as he landed: "We discover you on beach here." It's all the way one looks at it. As another man put it, the patriots are the good guys and the nationalists the bad ones; it's all a matter of identification. For example, the blind employee who uses buses and cabs presumably cannot

travel independently; however, the employee who uses a personal, state, or company vehicle may cost the employer more in the long run—particularly with some municipalities permitting the disabled to ride free or at reduced rates. In light of all the foregoing, it is perfectly clear, the whole matter deserves a careful, thorough scrutiny before adopting a premature and superficial policy.

Four basic areas that should be considered would be along these lines: (a) When does equality become privilege? (b) What are the services to be considered whose objective is to increase productivity? (c) What constitutes special or relevant? (d) There should be a common standard of excellence expected of able and disabled employees—sometimes this is the hardest objective to achieve. In the long run the standards for the private and public sectors should be identical. In the final analysis, what pays off for the state should pay off for anyone else, otherwise neither sector ought to institute such practices.

Whatever conclusions we reach about this subject, they ought to rest upon sound principles. More specifically, the National Federation of the Blind ought to adopt a policy because it is worthwhile, and because it pays off in terms of productivity and in social practice. Contrary to common belief—especially in this area—maximum productivity and benefits to society go hand in hand. While, of course, we cannot demand that others universally adopt our standards, we certainly can adhere to the view that our position in this matter—like so many others—is in the vanguard of social practice.

In arriving at a definitive policy the following criteria should be considered. These will be only briefly touched upon here, for in truth, books, monographs, papers, or what have you, could be written on each subject.

1. *Public and Private Sector*

There is a good deal of feeling that the state in general, and special agencies within government in particular—rehabilitation, employment, and so on—should lead the way and provide the example for others to follow in establishing a forward-looking policy respecting the hiring of the disabled. It is argued that Congress and the respective state legislatures hardly would have created these departments with hundreds of thousands of employees to help disabled persons secure jobs, and then be concerned about special assistance for handicapped individuals placed in government employment. It goes without saying, that if all the employees within the Federal and state units of government were disabled—an extremely unlikely proposition—there might be concern about so-called extra assistive devices or services. It seems reasonable to assume that when Congress and the legislatures created these units of government to assist the disabled, they also agreed to hire them. While no one could take issue with this proposition, to be effective, it must apply across the board. Therefore, while the example notion has some validity, practices of government must make sense in terms of efficiency and sound social theory. There are equally compelling reasons for the private sector to adopt enlightened policies in this area ranging from tax savings to maximizing markets for their products. The point here is that the public and private sector have a basis in enlightened self-interest for enhancing opportunities for the disabled.

I must express reservations, but many adhere to the proposition that government ought to be in the vanguard of facilitating employment of the disabled. It is contended that government cannot expect others to do what it is unwilling to do itself. In my opinion, the proponents of government leader-

ship may have mistaken political expedience for responsiveness to social preference. For it certainly cannot matter who initiates sound social precepts; and there is evidence aplenty that private employers once convinced of a wise course, are fully capable of implementing innovations with vigor and imagination. The major factor to be considered is that irrespective of who sets the example, whatever new practices and/or procedures are introduced ought to make sense in terms of social policy and in dollars and cents.

2. Equal Protection of the Laws

A good deal of discussion centers upon the idea that when an individual is hired, the employer implicitly makes a commitment to do everything possible to enable that person to succeed. For some to achieve success means the providing of an automobile, for others a certain kind of desk, and drivers for still others. The notion of equality enters into the picture in the fact that different employees require different devices or services to succeed. Therefore, to provide only those services or devices required by the majority class of employees—the able-bodied—and to refuse to make available the services and devices required by the minority class—the disabled—may constitute unequal protection of the law respecting equal opportunity to succeed in employment.

3. The Disabled as Taxpayers

Disabled employees pay taxes which provide a variety of aids for employees to perform their work. A number of the aids purchased cannot be utilized by the disabled, yet they pay taxes for them. If the disabled must pay taxes for aids they cannot use, does it not seem just and reasonable that the assistance they need should be paid from tax revenues? Similarly, disabled employees labor to produce a variety of products for

private firms. Profits from these items are in part plowed back into the industry to purchase aids of all kinds for employees. Therefore, it seems equally reasonable that disabled employees should receive some of the benefits derived through the efforts of their toil.

4. Reordering of Priorities

The question of what properly constitutes an impediment deserves careful analysis. It can be argued that the inability to obtain a driver's license constitutes as much of a barrier to the blind as steps to a wheelchair user. In other words, the very careful distinctions sometimes drawn between equipment and personal services may in fact be artificial.

Currently, public and private employers provide a variety of assistance to their employees which may be classified as marginal. Among these may be briefcases, paper clips, name plates, and so on. If the government through the legislatures and private firms through the stockholders were asked to make a choice between purchasing these marginal items—to make work easier for the able-bodied—as opposed to providing drivers or attendants—make it possible for disabled citizens to work—it just might be that a higher priority would be given to the latter group. In any event, it should not be automatically assumed that the current practice is fixed on concrete and so is beyond revision—a reordering of priorities may be long overdue.

5. Sound Social Policy

In the late 19th century a famous French writer observed that every time a school is opened a jail is closed. While many may quarrel with the ratio proposed, the public school system in this country rests upon this principle: Somewhere down the road it was decided by the collective will and conscience that society would be advanced substantially

if the citizenry were educated. Therefore, the taxation of the poor without children could be justified in order to provide education for the offspring of the rich. It might reasonably be put forward that society has decided that it is good business to put the disabled to work and that it will do everything necessary to guarantee the success of this venture.

6. *Equality or Privilege*

Throughout much of this discussion one must constantly wrestle with the problem of what exactly constitutes privilege and what are the fundamental elements of equality. Today, in light of governmental assistance to the able-bodied in the form of tariffs or price-support subsidies, the question posed is not easily answered. Certainly, I do not intend to settle the issue here; however, I think in view of these special assistance programs—in all probability primarily for able-bodied citizens—it can be concluded safely that special or different aid may be awarded to a class of individuals without destroying the concept of equality. In other words, in order to compete, manufacturers need tariffs and farms need price supports; yet most persons would not regard these activities as constituting privilege. It seems reasonable to apply the identical principle to a deaf employee who needs an interpreter or a quadriplegic who requires an attendant.

7. *Noblesse Oblige and the Organized Consumers*

Many thinkers throughout the ages have promoted the idea that it is the duty of those who possess the means to carry out reforms. Those who find themselves in a position to bring about needed changes should do so, if for no other reason than to improve the general welfare—a kind of noblesse oblige. In this connection it might be relevant to mention that Chancellor Bismarck for years cut

the ground from under the German labor movement by anticipating and granting the usual union demands to the workers. In this manner Bismarck curtailed labor strife so typical in industrially developing nations.

The alternative to noblesse oblige historically has been self-organization for collective action. In this instance, the logical course is that the disabled will somehow find the wherewithal to demand and to secure the means to ensure their employment. In other words, employers who could not be convinced of the wisdom of cooperating with the labor movement scene found themselves embroiled in a never-ending conflict. With the disabled advocacy program increasingly gaining momentum, affirmative action activity, FEPC legislation, and the general awakening of the disabled populations, a parallel course to labor may not be as farfetched as some would think.

8. *Reduced Welfare Rolls*

A negative argument sometimes put forward is that if the disabled are not given access to the job market, with all that entails, society must support these citizens through costly relief programs. The negative factor in this action is the idea that the disabled only work in given jobs because they cannot find employment elsewhere. Of course, all of us know that such is not the case, but the argument rests upon the precept that when the disabled cannot find work, they inevitably fall back upon public assistance. With the recent legislation surrounding the Lockheed and Penn Central corporations, it may be that the disabled do not have a monopoly on this practice. As a corollary to this notion, the suggestion is often offered that a disabled employee be allowed to claim special expenses up to the level of the prevailing welfare grant in the state respecting the specific disability.

9. Identification

Earlier it was suggested that many of the so-called extra aids and/or services may boil down to a lack of identification among the able-bodied and the disabled employees. Many are familiar with instances where able-bodied employees have been accompanied by an assistant to a meeting, conference, or the like. However, when such is done by an able-bodied employee, the procedure is looked upon as the height of efficiency. On the other hand, when a disabled person takes similar action, the matter is almost always automatically characterized as a requirement mandated by the physical impairment. In other words, as previously stated, the patriots are the good guys and the nationalists the bad; it all depends upon how you look at it.

10. *Employee and One-half, One-fourth, Et Cetera*

Finally, one hears talk that it is wrong to force an employer to hire an employee and a half or an employee and a fourth or two workers where one could do the job. Of course, one can always pose impossible situations such as requiring an attendant to shift a quadriplegic every ten minutes. I am not certain whether that example may be as ridiculous as it appears upon first blush, but the point I wish to make here is that in the case of the able-bodied, an employer may bring about a similar situation without knowing it. Let us suppose that a particular job requires the level of 140 IQ to perform the given task satisfactorily. Under current practices, employers could assign such an activity to an individual with 100 IQ or to a person with a level of 165. The person assigned to an exacting job, but who possesses average intelligence, may have devised ways and techniques of obtaining assistance to perform the work satisfactorily without detec-

tion or notice. Yet, it has been demonstrated that in such circumstances, the individual is receiving assistance, or that an employer is hiring an employee and one half, and so on. Whereas, the blind, the deaf, the quad may be regarded as requiring assistance, when actually they may be taking advantage of services and equipment afforded to all.

In the last analysis, the situations may not be analogous or the equivalence factor may fall short, but enough variables have been indicated to raise serious questions about what exactly constitutes an employee and a half, and so forth. In the long run, adoption of a restrictive policy by any employer may prove to be penny wise and pound foolish.

Upon two or three occasions I have been moved from an exit seat on a plane only to be replaced by someone who may panic in a crisis or have other invisible problems. There is hardly a disabled person who has not witnessed similar conduct. It could be that the individual who took my exit seat could have a serious heart condition; yet, no thought is given to this possibility. The relevance of all this talk is that much of the discussion centering upon extra or special assistance may have surfaced because of the visibility factor surrounding certain disabilities.

Group deliberations too often put a premium upon consensus rather than content; on unanimity in place of precision; on compromise as a substitute for creativity. The overriding purpose of this effort is that as we approach a decision on this complex matter, we do not permit this opportunity to be creative escape. The heritage of the Federation obligates us to act with knowledge and with wisdom. The disabled are either workers and colleagues in the full sense of these terms, or they are not. It is folly to pretend that they can be equal under certain circumstances and subordinate in others.

In closing, we could do no better than to reach into the archives for guidelines. In the fall of 1957 Dr. tenBroek put it this way:

"The National Federation of the Blind is unequivocally *for* all treatment which is *equalizing*, which moves toward equal opportunity and equal status, and just as unequivocally *against* all treatment which renders the blind unequal or perpetuates an artificial inequality.

"The commitment of the blind on behalf of equalizing treatment is a demand for two kinds of social action. On its negative side it calls for programs aimed at removal of the social obstacles in the path of normal life and productive livelihood—including the barriers of discrimination, the doubts of the ignorant, the suspicions of the prejudiced, the misguided charity of the benevolent, and the corrosive malice of those whose privileged positions are threatened by our independence. This aspect of equalizing treatment does its work through education and demonstration, through information and public relations. But there is a positive side as well—and it is with this that we are principally and immediately concerned. The positive work of equalizing treatment requires public programs and social provisions which will not merely reduce the barriers but actively create new conditions of opportunity and encourage the initiative and independence of the blind. . . ."

"Just as public health, welfare, and morals are proper concerns of the whole society

—just as the prevention of blindness, for example, is a social responsibility—so is the prevention of discrimination and the abolition of restrictive barriers raised against the blind. Public provisions to promote their welfare and security has taken a number of forms—some good, some bad, and a very few indifferent. I suggest that the test of all programs and services for the blind should be the degree of their concurrence with the purposes of equalizing treatment as opposed to preferential treatment with the long-range goals of personal and financial independence, equal opportunity, and equal protection, full and free participation in the mainstream of community affairs. . . .

The organized blind reject without equivocation any doctrine of special privilege and preferential treatment which assumes a difference which is more than physical, and works to segregate and isolate the blind from normal society. The ultimate end for which we labor is equality in all its phases, and the only means to this end which has our sanction is that of *equalizing* treatment; treatment that advances steadily in the direction of equal opportunity, equal rights, equal protection, and equal status; in short, toward the treatment of equals in a free society.

After centuries of patronage and charity following upon long ages of total rejection and exclusion, the blind believe that equality of treatment is preferable. We do display a preference, at the very heart of our philosophy; a preference for equality."

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME: WHERE IT STANDS IN 1975

BY
SUMNER WHITTIER

President JERNIGAN. The next item on the program is one of some importance to us: "Supplemental Security Income: Where It Stands in 1975." Mr. Sumner Whittier was here last year. He was here the year before. He is Director of Supplemental Security Income for the Aged, Blind, and Disabled, Social Security Administration, Baltimore. I know there have been problems in the Supplemental Security Income program. I also know Mr. Whittier has worked cooperatively with us to try his best to solve these problems, and has always been responsive to the requests we have made from him. Undoubtedly we'll have questions to raise later on. I'd like to present now to you, Mr. Sumner Whittier. [Applause]

Mr. WHITTIER. Mr. President and ladies and gentlemen of this great Convention, I'm delighted to be with you once again. I've already talked to Ludlow and Watertown this morning and I read in the briefing for exhibitors that this is the largest collection of blind people ever to have occurred in the world—is that right? [Applause] I also understand that every single state in the Union and D. C. are represented—is that right? [Applause] Incidentally we do have a lot of SSA people and SSI people around. I brought my brains this time. David Tomlinson is here on the platform. Dave is not only head of States Relations for us, he's an ordained Presbyterian minister. I hired a minister because I thought that with our problems we need prayer more than anybody else. [Applause] I also have Fred Crawford, who also happens to be blind, Lisa Good, and Harold Hagan, Ruth Morris—will all the SSA people stand up—I hope you're all well scattered around so that they ask you the ques-

tions and not me. Incidentally, I can see that you're just as militant as ever. I was trying to be nice when I got on the elevator this morning and there were a number of white canes there. I said, "Has everybody the floor punched?" And then I said, "Oh, they've got Braille on the numbers, isn't that thoughtful." The woman who was standing beside me said, "No, it's thoughtful that they put other numbers, so you could punch." [Applause] I said, "That's the Federation."

In the first year after the President and the Congress had brought Supplemental Security Income into being, and we were struggling to get the great machinery into place, and make it work, people and offices and computers, you invited me, as first SSI Bureau Director, to be your guest and I came to you, I think in New York. I was a stranger and you took me warmly in, sometimes I thought, very warmly. [Applause] In the first and most difficult of all the pioneering years, when the first checks went out, you invited me that second time and we renewed our warm friendship. And now, once more we meet, old friends and warm friends, and dear friends. I told you early on that if you invited me, I would come, and come I have; every time you extended [applause] a gracious welcome. It is not just because I am very fond of all of you, although I am, there is something about your enthusiastic meetings that renews the spirit, that makes a man more willing and more strong to go back and tackle the impossible challenge. Once he comes here and sees and feels and hears your lively encouragement—we're somehow going to make those computers sit up and purr. [Applause] It is not

only that I had at the banquet the privilege of listening to your President, though that is a rich experience. I have learned very much every time I have heard his scholarly and articulate dissertations and I congratulate him on his new doctorate, honorary, from Drake University. He portrays in singing words, not alone the spirit but as well the soul and aspirations of those who are blind—that woman told me, you know, isn't it lucky that you sighted have that button to punch. I have thought a hundred times as I have listened to him that his sight was so much clearer, so far more penetrating, than thousands of sighted men I knew. The blind do often see more clearly, don't they? Because they can overlook the superficial and see straight into the heart. [Applause]

We come together on the eve of the Nation's birthday. A Nation designed to make men free, and yet we are not completely free even now, you and I. There are still challenges to be met, barriers to be broken down, before we can say the words I saw at the grave just two weeks ago of Martin Luther King: 'Free at last, Free at last/Thank God Almighty/I'm free at last.' [Applause]

Social Security with its 83,000 employees attempts and intends such a policy in its 1,300 offices across the country to provide freedom with cash payments in retirement or disability for the aged, blind, and disabled. I watch this Government grow bigger and ever bigger in an effort to serve. Yet, its very bigness makes it the more remote. Too many of our citizens in great wards, in small towns and villages, feel distant and alienated from their government. They feel they have no voice nor influence. They wonder who are these bureaucrats in some far office who make the decisions that affect our lives? I believe as deeply as I believe anything, that this Republic is based on the principle that its citizens should have

voice and influence. Sitting here on this platform listening to you with your resolutions and listening to your President say, "Send it to the President, and mention Mr. Gashel's name; you will have clout." That's important. That you here assembled, the blind of America, should have voice and influence.

As director of this program, I come to you because I believe that this Government must be responsive. Responsiveness is a word I would stress. A director of a program for the blind should meet with and talk with those who are the consumers and the users—should hear their views, [applause] should answer their questions or try to, no matter how challenging or difficult, and you certainly can dream those up. If government is getting bigger and moving ever farther away from local streets and communities, then there is need for those interested in a cause or crusade to form organizations or societies representing all parts of America, all places in America, so that they speak with the voice of the Nation and are impressive enough—what was it your President said, be sure when you write that letter mention the Federation—impressive enough and influential enough to be listened to, and to be heard. I listen with special interest each year to the figures as you add these other states, as you increase your membership half a million in this great and growing army that will not be denied. [Applause] As government grows there is need for united citizen response such as the Federation demonstrates, not an organization speaking for the blind, but the blind speaking for themselves. [Applause] You are big, you are strong and growing stronger and you do speak firmly and clearly to the Nation in the areas of your deepest concern. [Applause] Kenneth Jernigan can walk into the office of the President of the United States and command respect. [Ap-

plause] Kenneth Jernigan, President of this huge and vocal organization, can walk into the offices of any member of the Congress of the United States and command respect in his name and in yours. It is not just because he is an impressive and competent human being; it is as well because he speaks for you, as you would have him speak. So I come to you with the same respect which you demand and which you deserve. I understand full well the need for you to build and grow if you are to move the programs of a Nation.

Incidentally, this may be my last visit with you. I'm not sure, but sometime between now and your next Convention, I may move to another position. My wife says if there's another crisis, I'll find it. [Applause] I confess the program has not accomplished all that I had hoped, when we laid out the blueprint. When Elliot Richardson, one of the great minds and men of America from Massachusetts, and when Robin Ball, one of the great administrators, talked to me about this challenge, they had high hopes and great dreams. We have come down the road, they pointed out—a long, long way—not as fast as we wished, not as far as we wished, but progress has been made, great gains have been achieved, though you will agree much still remains to be done. And I shall review, relatively briefly, the gains and the gaps with you this day.

Your Federation laid out for Congress a blueprint for cash payments to the blind. And the SSI law to an amazing degree followed that design. You can claim immense credit for this law. Now I traced all that in detail in my first talk to you. I listed what you said, and then I read the lines of the law. However, once the program was launched, many things did not appear in actual practice exactly the way they had looked on the drawing board. You have pointed out necessary changes and improvements and we

have tried to respond. Now I do have to live by the law, you wouldn't want me to break the law—that does get you in trouble in Washington. Many changes have already been made. You told us that when an individual who was blind went to our offices in those states where a blind person's benefit was higher than that for the aged, the blind person had to file under the aged category and receive that lesser payment. I told you last year that change, the so-called Jernigan amendment, would be made. It has been made in all the states. [Applause] (I had to get the permission from both the Commissioner and the Secretary before I came here last year.) And in all the states where there is a higher benefit for the blind, California, Nevada, Iowa, Massachusetts, have agreed to the change, as was required.

In this program based upon need, individuals should receive their benefits as promptly as possible. A disabled person in nine different categories of disability can apply for benefits at a Social Security office. And if he appears to be eligible and if his disability appears to meet the conditions of payment, he can receive presumptive disability payments for up to three months while awaiting the final disposition of his claim. If he's found to be ineligible, the money he has received need not be returned. And yet the blind have no such right under the law. They must be fully processed; an application taken and sent to the state disability unit, and all the rest—a long procedure, which you've pointed out. And yet in many instances, blindness is easy to determine. I have, therefore, recommended to the Commissioner, the Commissioner has recommended to the Secretary, and I believe the Secretary will recommend to the Congress—I do know that Ways and Means already has a bill blueprinted—that the law be changed so that the blind shall have the right

of presumptive disability determination. [Applause] So that there will be, in some instances, faster payments.

One problem with the national programs sending out millions of checks at the same time each month, is that long lines form at the banks waiting to cash the checks. In some of the big cities, thieves who prey upon the elderly and handicapped wait for the checks to arrive. They know the day, and then steal them out of mail boxes or rip them away from helpless people. Social Security has worked out a direct-deposit system. We experimented in the Southeastern states and we are now in the process of going national. It will soon be possible to have your check sent right to the bank to be credited to your personal checking or savings account. That means if you're away when the check arrives it will still be deposited in the bank and it may lessen considerably, we hope, the problem of stolen checks. [Applause]

Your Resolutions Committee is a busy group. I haven't seen all the SSI resolutions this year, but I await nervously. [Laughter] Last year, was it 74-02, I think, I even can remember the numbers now, they called for a cost of living escalator clause. That cost of living escalating clause, which you asked for, has been added to the law. [Applause] The first increase, 8 percent, became effective just two days ago, July 1. Even as we sit here assembled, checks are arriving in mail boxes across America. The Social Security checks, the green checks, will include an 8 percent increase, the Supplemental Security checks, the gold checks, will include an 8 percent increase. They'll go from \$146 per month for a single individual without other income to \$157.70—they have to make it complicated to get the pennies in. And from \$219 for a couple to \$236.60 a month. There is a substantial ad-

vantage to having an increase in both checks at the same time. You do recall now, that they do make adjustments. As you know, the SSI program sets a basic floor, a basic amount, as it computes benefits. The Government says everyone that is below that poverty level ought to have at least this amount, a minimal amount. Income from all other sources is counted, save for some that is excluded by law. Then the Federal Government fills in the gap between that income and that basic floor so that the person receives that basic floor amount in his SSI check. If a recipient gets income from any other source, such as salaries or pensions, SSI is then reduced by the amount of that other income, except for some exceptions. That means, that just like a salary or the other things the Social Security amount is counted too, as the SSI check is computed and the increase in the SSA check is deducted from the SSI check. Previously when only the Social Security check increased, some beneficiaries got absolutely no gain. One check went up, the other went down by the same amount and not one added bag of groceries could be purchased. With both benefits increasing by the same percentage and at the same time, there will be an increase—you won't get both—but there will be an increase for all recipients. There's an exception—those states where there is no supplement.

Many of you have asked the question, why does the Government give with one hand—you know, Social Security—and take away at the same time with the other. It is not quite as illogical as it seems. If we do not find some way to put all the many government programs together, and they're certainly fragmented—there's food stamps, housing, and veterans compensation, and pensions, and medicaid, I won't read the whole list, but the end result is a series of

add-ons that does not always treat all people fairly. And there is a desire on the part of all of us, I think, to try to find a way to treat people as fairly as possible. We have not, I think you'll agree, found that way yet. But equity is the reason that this effort is made by the Congress to combine program benefits, and to offset one against the other. Now, where the state adds a state payment to the Federal basic amount, recipients will get that SSI increase if the state continues to pay the same amount it paid in June. Now I am pleased to tell you that in almost all of the states, most of the major ones, there will be a pass along. . . . So millions of Americans are going to get the increase of 8 percent. Now some, I think are not, and you had a resolution on this subject.

You will be interested in comparing percent of wage increases with benefit increases. The Consumer Price Index has risen by about 36 percent in the last four years. Social Security has risen by about 50 percent. SSI has gone up about 21 percent since October, 1972, when the original law was designed. Some states have increased their supplemental payments within the year and a half, so there have been increases. The problem is that I can talk about billions of dollars and the millions of dollars, but if you're sitting alone on the west or south side of Chicago, in a fourth floor cold-water flat, and you get the money—it looks different from the billions I quote. It's still hard to spend it.

The effects differ from state to state, and it's hard to explain, that's why it's important for you to be organized in the states, too. Now, what can be done about the problems that are in this law? Supplemental Security is a year and a half old and this is a good time for review and evaluation. The General Accounting Office, which is an arm of Congress, has had, I think, some 30 peo-

ple reviewing for several months, not only the law itself, but the entire administrative process—what we're doing for Congress. The Ways and Means Committee has held hearings which have lasted for over two weeks and the members of staff are reviewing all aspects of the law. The Senate Finance Committee is doing the same thing for the Senate. We've had their staff in our offices. The Senate Committee on Aging has held hearings, I think there were 12 U. S. Senators who wanted to know all the details. . . . Internally, HEW itself is doing a full and total review, the Secretary has appointed a group that had nothing to do with the actual implementation—totally independent—and they are studying the entire subject to make recommendations to see if the law cannot be improved. And all the various advocate groups, too, are reviewing the program and many have appeared before the Congress or in special sessions with congressional staff. The Federation did appear and you made your recommendations and I'm sure many will be adopted. So it is obvious that many of the changes will be made. It's very obvious that this law is immense, it's obvious that it's very complex. Just imagine one person trying to figure out the way all of its ramifications work. . . . Every effort, each effort should be made to try to close the gap or fix a problem; that has added to the complexity.

I said membership in the Federation was important, that you needed the Federation, because in this instance of complexity, it has the ability to hire the experts in the National Office, Jim Gashel in Washington, to stay close to the program in Congress as well as HEW, SSA, and other bureaus, and offer technical consultative advice. In union there is strength, in federation there is hope and help. It is important to know what the Federal Government is doing, of course, but this

program is a state-Federal partnership, both levels of government pay part of the entire cost. Both make decisions, and it's important for you to determine in your state, what the decisions have been and what the effects are, what actions you need to take. Programs should be simple and easy to understand, but they never seem to come out that way. Every effort is made, not only to improve, but to simplify. The problem is, that sometimes the two goals conflict. When we try to take care of some difficult situation, to achieve greater equity, the solution may, in fact, require more complexity. I've said I would discuss some of the problems and I've done that.

I want to mention, however, some of the immense positives. In this year, since the program began, a year of terrible inflationary demands on those of fixed incomes—more than a million SSI recipients than there were under the old program—we're up from 3 million to 4.1 million, the total Federal and state cash benefits together for the aged, blind, and disabled have increased by 2.2 billions of dollars. They have gone up, in the total now, by 66 percent. The total dollars have gone up from 3.3 billion to 5.5 billion. And as I say, you interpret that in the check you get, and when it's divided across four million people, it always does not seem as big as these figures I quote. Now, the Federal portion, the Federal Government raised its payment from 2 billion to 4.3 billion. That's more than both state and Federal were paying under the old program, and most of these individuals are eligible for Medicaid which needs another 2 billion. So there's an increase here of 4 billion dollars. The state portion has overall some—many states it's gone up—but across the country the state portion stayed relatively constant, down a little from 1.3 billion to 1.2 billion. Since you first appeared before the commit-

tees of Congress, with your design, much has occurred. There have been, in many instances, more adequate benefits for many of those who were on the rolls, they have increased, there is equity for those wherever they live, at least the basic uniform floor.

But however far we come there is a farther journey yet to travel. Hundreds of people have been helped, hundreds of blind have help they would not have had, had this Federation not raised its strong voice before the lawmakers. Many changes have been made in the administrative policies, because you have been heard by the officials who administer them. Even as I come and listen to you now, and even as members of Social Security families everywhere across the land know you, and respond, it is not enough for there are those needs unmet. We are acutely aware that we, too, must do better in administering the program. Last year upon the floor of this great Convention, an employee of SSA who is a member of the Federation as many SSA people are, stood and said we needed more staff across the country, if SSA was to provide the kind of service of which it has long been proud. The top officials of SSA went to the office of Manpower and Budget, went to the White House itself, with the request for that added staff and SSA has been given eight thousand more term employees to help across the country, eight thousand more for the offices. [Applause] We have opened more new offices, we have set up additional machines, yet more changes must come and will come before we are satisfied. A whole new Social Security component of advanced design has been installed to remake totally all of our computer programming and to bring it fully up to date in the state of the computer art as it is possible to be. No individual should get lost in a computer if it is humanly possible.

It's a good law and we must make it better. We shall work toward that end, you and I. Often we agree perfectly, certainly we always agree on the goal of the best possible service that a responsive government can supply. Sometimes in the process of government, with its many conflicting interests, we must compromise. Still we look beyond, toward administrative improvement, toward faster processing time, toward quicker payments. And my guess is that when you look at it next year or within 18 months, we'll have leveled off to a point I consider routine operational programs. Important, most important, is that we continue our dialogue: Each year here we talk, each day somewhere you visit our offices. I am aware of not only what you want in the ways of law and administration, I have learned about you. I was going to close with one of Mr. Jernigan's quotes. I've heard him talk of blind men and women in history who've led armies, who've governed nations, who've captained industries. I've heard him talk of the blind in literature, and of the varied attitudes authors have expressed about the blind. I even heard him talk about sex and the healthy invigorating approach you take to that fascinating area. [Applause] . . . But Ken has one great message, each here in this room is as good as any person, sighted or unsighted, and better than many. One quick quote, and I end. I got this from Faulkner's book *Burning in the Night*: "The desire for fame is rooted in the hearts of men. It is one of the most powerful of all human desires. And we, O brothers, like our fathers in their time, we are burning, burning, burning in the night. Go seeker, if you will throughout the land, and you will find us burning in the night. Just make yourself at home, refresh yourself, get the feel of things and adjust your sights and get the scale. It's your pasture now, and it's not

so big, only three thousand miles from east to west, only two thousand miles from north to south. But in between where ten thousand points of light prick out the cities, towns and villages, there seeker you will find us, burning in the night. So then to every man, and woman, too, his chance, her chance, to every man regardless of his birth, his shining golden opportunity, to every man his right to live, to work, to be himself, and to become whatever thing his manhood and his vision can combine to make him. This seeker, is the promise of America." [Prolonged applause]

[Resolution 75-05, on the forty-eight month limit on post-secondary education, printed elsewhere in this issue, was read and duly adopted.]

Mr. MARCELINO. Mr. Whittier, I would like to ask you how the Social Security Administration justifies that rule which would prohibit blind people from pursuing professional positions or careers. They have stated to us in their correspondence, in reply to Perry Sundquist, that SSI is not intended for, or to enable people to achieve professional status but to encourage them to become self-supporting.

President JERNIGAN. Mr. Whittier, will you take a mike, and comment on that, please.

Mr. WHITTIER. Yes, I'll be delighted, and Muzzy can be heard with or without a mike. [Laughter] Last year there were two or three very technical questions so this year I brought Dave with me to see if we could answer as precisely as we could here, but if we do not, we will, as we did last year, write them out and send them to your President for whatever use you wish to make of them. If you have others, don't hesitate to get in touch with us where you are and don't hesitate to write to me in Baltimore and you get those answers.

The problem you raised last year, this is not new, and as a result of that discussion we have had a number of discussions, both without General Counsel, the law does say, whatever the quote is, on a self-support plan. . . . It is an administrative determination of the Secretary and Social Security and we have wrestled with it, I trust; and I'd like to find some exceptions if we could. Your point is well taken. We have not found a way to get around it. I believe that you have also asked Congress, too, to pass a law in that regard. But I do not know an easy answer and I'm sorry. You raise an excellent point.

President JERNIGAN. Jim Gashel will begin to work on this with the officials of HEW and Mr. Whittier. We will see if we can make contacts with the General Counsel and see if we can do something toward this.

[Resolution 75-06, on \$25,000 limitation on market value of real property used as a home by SSI recipient was read.]

Mr. WHITTIER. The law gives the Secretary the right to set that amount. We did set it, as it states, \$25,000 for a home. This is causing real problems. If you won't give away a secret, if you won't tell it to anyone else because I don't want anyone else to know it, because it is not yet official, so this is just between us as old friends, but we are recommending that that \$25,000 be taken out. But I haven't got the official word, so invite whoever represents SSI next year and he'll probably be able to tell you that this resolution, too, has been complied with and I think that we might in some other areas such as automobiles and personal belongings go even farther than you've asked for. [Applause] Remember that that's a secret until I get all the initials on the paper.

President JERNIGAN. And also, just in case they don't do it, let's pass the resolu-

tion. All those in favor say "aye." [The resolution was adopted.]

[Resolution 75-07, on the ineligible spouse \$65 limitation on retention of income and regulations on "deeming" was read.]

President JERNIGAN. Mr. Whittier, do you wish to comment?

Mr. WHITTIER. Yes. That's a tough one for us. The problem comes about, and becomes the more acute, and I heard this from the pro's, because you are comparing the Federal law, of course, with the state, and in many states they were more generous and we did not grandfather it in. There are some increases, of course. When the payment overall goes up, then the amount deemed goes up. But that's relatively small; it's a percentage. Part of our problem is, if it is an ineligible spouse, we can't pay the ineligible spouse more than we're paying an eligible spouse. It's the effort to get equity there. And I don't know any easy answer to this one. This is a resolution similar to last year's and I don't know whether both California and Pennsylvania had it. I do not see any easy solutions to the deeming in order to keep it equitable across the board.

President JERNIGAN. But on the other hand, Mr. Whittier, you're not paying the ineligible spouse anything.

Mr. WHITTIER. That's correct. Under the law, under the old law, under the converted cases, essential person we do pay. Under this law, essential persons are not covered.

President JERNIGAN. I know; I understand that. But when you say you can't pay the ineligible spouse more than you pay the eligible spouse, and you aren't paying them now, anything, I'm—

Mr. WHITTIER. The amount that they would get if they were getting the full payment, is what I'm saying. You can't add what the recipient is getting plus the amount,

if it's a couple, which would come out to be more than what the couple would get if both were eligible. That would appear to our General Counsel to be inequitable.

Mr. MARCELINO. Where does Mr. Whittier get that you pay the ineligible spouse anything. He is ineligible and he should be permitted to retain a reasonable amount of his own earned income for his own support. And this way you don't allow him but \$65, which nobody can live on. Do you really think a person can live on \$65 a month? [Applause and gavel] The SSI is not for the ineligible spouse, mind you, the SSI is for the blind person.

Mr. WHITTIER. I understand this.

Mr. MARCELINO. I want Mr. Whittier to get on this. Why can't there be a sensible rule which would allow the ineligible spouse to have a reasonable amount of income for his or her support? What prevents you from doing it?

Mr. WHITTIER. Well, it was the joint decision, sitting down with both the General Counsel and several individuals who have input into all of this, and this is the decision at which they arrived. Now, I recognize your position and it has been discussed, but this is where they came out. I don't know

what more to tell you than that's where it stands. I understand the problem, but that's the ruling they made after reviewing all of the input. I'd hate to have to live on \$65, too.

Mr. MARCELINO. We know that that's the ruling but we want the rule changed.

President JERNIGAN. What I would say is that we pass this resolution. We will then undertake to negotiate with Mr. Whittier and other people in the department and see if we can get this rule altered.

Mr. WHITTIER. I suggested to Larry on the first question that he raised that when the Convention was over, I would have him and Jim, as Jim has done at times, come to Washington, sit down, not just with me but with several of those who have input, so that at the very point of decision-making all the key people who play a part in this, could sit in the room, for the same kind of vigorous, complete, and detailed discussion, and all points made with all who, in the main, take a part in making these decisions. So you could have your input face to face with all the decision makers. That we will do.

President JERNIGAN. [Applause] I think that's fair and reasonable.

[Resolution 75-07 was adopted]

THE RANDOLPH-SHEPPARD AMENDMENTS OF 1974 OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES IN THE VENDING FACILITIES PROGRAM

BY
JAMES GASHEL

President JERNIGAN. We have serious business to deal with this afternoon. First, here's Jim Gashel to talk about the "Randolph-Sheppard Amendments of 1974: Opportunities and Challenges in the Vending Facilities Program." Jim Gashel has done a good job in our Washington Office, [applause and cheers] and here he is. Give him heed.

Jim, I'm going to put a timer on you. Go ahead.

Mr. GASHEL. Thank you, Mr. President and fellow Federationists. The 93rd Congress was perhaps distinctive in terms of work with blind persons with respect to the passage of the 1974 Amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act. These were long-

sought amendments and we accomplished much of what we set out to do in the passage of the 1974 Amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act. This afternoon, I want to run through some of the highlights of these amendments as a prelude to the discussions of them which will occur during this afternoon.

First, a major change in the new amendments was made when the term "vending stand" was replaced by the term "vending facility." Now, the exact meaning of the new term, vending facility, has real importance for us, I think, if we make it work in the new program. The definition of vending facility reads as follows: "Automatic vending machines, cafeterias, snack bars, cart services, shelters, counters, and such other appropriate auxiliary equipment, as the Secretary, by regulation, may prescribe." Now the items which may be sold in a vending facility are designated in the act as follows: "Foods, beverages, and other articles or services dispensed automatically or manually and prepared on or off the premises in accordance with all applicable health provisions as determined by the state licensing agency." The real significance of this change is known immediately to those of you familiar with the old act which required, very often, that foods had to be prepared before receipt at the blind vending stand and had to be prewrapped and prepackaged and we always had to hassle about the matter of blind persons getting cafeterias. The new act should make some corrections in this and the term blind vending facility and the definitions thereof are important in that respect. Next, Federal responsibility for administering the provisions of the Randolph-Sheppard Act is now fixed totally within the Rehabilitation Services Administration. The Commissioner, who is with us here today, shall "within one hundred and eighty days

after enactment of the Randolph-Sheppard Act Amendments of 1974, establish requirements for uniform application of the Act by each State licensing agency." Additionally, the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, through the Commissioner, shall conduct periodic evaluations of the blind vending facility program and annually submit to the Congress a report based on these evaluations. So there will be an ongoing oversight function in the appropriate committee of the Congress with respect to the RSA.

Next, the amendments further provide that after January 1, 1975, no agency or department shall acquire or occupy by ownership, rent, or lease, any building, or any part of any building which does not have satisfactory site or sites for the location and operation of a vending facility by a blind person. Now the language of the amendments makes it clear that there must be consultation between the head of any Federal agency, department, or instrumentality of the United States, and the state agency for the blind, that is, the licensing agency, prior to the acquisition, occupancy or any kind of rent or ownership of Federal property by the Federal agency, to determine that there will, in fact, be satisfactory site or sites for a vending facility. If we make that kind of provision work, we ought not to be stuck off in some small corner where nobody goes in a post office. We ought to be able to get vending facility locations that can provide blind persons with a viable income. [Applause]

Now, furthermore, after January 1, 1975, any Federal agency which initiates plans to construct, substantially alter or renovate, any facility, the design of this construction, substantial alteration or renovation must also include the provision for a satisfactory site or sites for the location and operation of a vending facility by a blind person. Each de-

partment, or agency shall provide notice to the appropriate state licensing agency of its plans for occupancy, acquisition, renovation, or relocation of a building adequate to permit the state licensing agency to determine whether such building includes a satisfactory site or sites for vending facility to be operated by a blind person. What this means to us—the business about ownership, rent, and lease, and the business about prior consultation before all this happens—is that we know now that the agencies will know about these buildings and the locations coming up and we've got to get the agencies to get the locations that we ought to have. [Applause] In any event, it's in the law.

Now, with respect to the matter of set asides, there have been four uses permitted under the old act, and they are as follows: first, maintenance and replacement of equipment; second, purchase of new equipment; third, management services; and fourth, assuring a fair minimum return to operators. The amendments permit an additional, or a fifth, use for set asides, set aside from the proceeds, and incidentally, it's the net proceeds of the operators, and I'll have more to say about that. This purpose is stated in the amendments this way: "Retirement or pension funds, health insurance contributions, and provision for paid sick leave and vacation time." Now, the amendments further require that set aside funds may not be allocated to the above-mentioned purpose unless approved by a majority vote of the blind licensees in the state program. The state licensing agency is required to provide each blind licensee with full financial information on all matters relevant to this proposed program of retirement, pension funds, paid health insurance, and sick leave and vacation time. Finally, although there is no ceiling placed upon the amendment of set asides in the act which may be assessed

against the earnings of a blind operator, the amendments do state that set asides must be charged against the *net* proceeds and in some states the present formula for taking set asides may, in fact, be as much as 50 percent of the gross when we have it shown as net. In fact, it may be even more.

Next, major provisions of the new amendments are those which speak to the rights of fair hearing and arbitration for blind operators. Any blind licensee who is dissatisfied with any action arising from the operation of the vending facility program, may submit to the state licensing agency a request for a full evidentiary hearing, which must be provided by the state licensing agency in accordance with section 3(6). Now, if such blind licensee is dissatisfied with any action taken or any decision rendered as a result of such hearing, then he may file a complaint with the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, who shall convene a panel to arbitrate the dispute and the decision of such panel shall be final and binding on all parties, except as otherwise provided, which means that we can take it to court if we're not satisfied with the arbitration. Now, the arbitration panel convened by the Secretary works like this: one member is appointed by the blind licensee bringing the grievance; one member is appointed by the state licensing agency involved; and together they shall agree on the third member who shall serve as chairman and who may not be an employee of the state licensing agency. If they can't agree, then the Secretary of the Department of HEW picks the third member. The arbitration procedure is also available for state agencies in disputes with Federal agencies. The important point is that this is the provision which the Federation brought up and this is the provision which we insisted on and this is

a very important provision in the act and must be utilized by us. [Applause]

A great controversy over the years was the matter of assigning vending machine income and, in fact, that particular matter prevented us from getting the bill passed in several Congresses. In the 93rd Congress a compromise was struck which at least allowed us to get a bill. Spelled out in the amendments is the distinction between direct competition and competition which is not direct, that is, with respect to blind vending facilities and vending machines. In those cases where competition between vending machines operated by somebody else, and vending facilities operated by a blind person, in those cases where it is direct, then the blind person under this act gets all of the vending machine income in any situation. However, in those cases in which the competition is not direct, then there is a formula established which goes like this: First of all, if in that particular individual facility or location, the vending machine income is less than \$3,000 annually from the vending machines that are not in direct competition, then the blind vendor gets none of it. And that's a major weakness and it's one which we fought hard to keep out, but it is a major weakness. If, however, that vending machine income is greater than \$3,000 annually, then the blind vendor shall get 50 percent of it and 50 percent of it is assigned otherwise; except unless it is argued that more than 50 percent of the total hours worked in the facility occurs not during normal working periods, then the blind vendor gets only 30 percent. Those clauses were put in to save the post office situation.

So there were substantial compromises on vending machine income. Now, it should be noted that in Federal buildings or installations, where there is no blind licensee, funds from vending machines which would nor-

mally be assigned to a blind licensee, will now be assigned to state licensing agencies. That is, if there isn't a blind licensee there, the state licensing agency is going to get some of that vending machine money; and they have to plow it back into the program, first of all for the fifth purpose of set asides, and second, to reduce pro rata, the other four uses of set asides. This provision could work eventually for the reduction of set asides, at least we certainly hope that it will.

Now, under the heading, "Additional State Responsibilities," there are two other things that I want to conclude with. First of all, it is provided under the act that "blind licensees shall have access to all relevant financial data including quarterly and annual financial reports on the operation of the state vending facility program." Second, there is a provision for a committee of blind vendors under the act and this is not to be merely an advisory committee in nature. In fact, the committees really can be what we make them. But listen to the responsibilities spelled out for the committee, and the wording was picked carefully. Here are the responsibilities: (a) participation with the state agency in major administrative decisions and policy and program development; (b) receiving grievances of blind licensees and serving as advocates for such licensees; (c) participation with the state licensing agency in the development of a transfer and promotion system for blind licensees; (d) participation with the state licensing agency in developing training and retraining programs; and (e) sponsorship with the state licensing agency of meetings and instructional conferences. The committees of blind vendors are to be fully representative committees of the blind licensees in the state and should give us, if we make it work, a lot of clout in the new operation of the vending facility program.

Let me simply conclude by saying this: The 1974 Amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act have ushered in a whole new

era of consumerism in the blind vending facility program and it is up to us to make them work. [Vigorous applause]

A NEW LOOK AT SET ASIDE FUNDS

President JERNIGAN. Last year one man who was an observer at our Convention said, "Well, you know, you people tend to avoid controversial issues." Of all the things I've ever heard said about the Federation, it's one of the stranger ones. [Laughter] And I said, "No, no. We don't avoid controversial issues at all, but when we get through with them we go out as one. We always do that." And I said, "You know, what did you have in mind?" It came out that what he had in mind was the set aside question. We put that off until this year with the understanding that it would be discussed and debated, which, indeed, now it will be. I hope you will all pay attention because this is an important policy matter and once it's done, let's discuss it, let's vote on it, and then whatever the vote is, let's all go out and do it. Now, that's the way, as I see it, democratic procedures work. So, we have, "A New Look at Set Aside Funds." To discuss it we have two people: John Taylor, who is Assistant Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind in Des Moines; and Perry Sundquist, Editor of THE BRAILLE MONITOR in Sacramento. Mr. Taylor will lead off. You have from right now, nine minutes.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. President. The Federation has had a long-standing position on set asides that stems back to the time the amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act were being considered in 1954. We argued long and hard at that time that set asides should be prohibited altogether in the vending facility program. And we lost. Although on the overall issues, we did gain

some appreciable restrictions on the uses for which funds could be set aside from the vending facility program.

As I have traveled back and forth across the country representing the Federation at state conventions and in a variety of other matters in the past two years, I have encountered a number of vending facility people, particularly, who have wanted to discuss this traditional position in which we flatly oppose any set asides, any time, any place, under any circumstances. And vending facility operators have said to me that in some instances the vending facility program was the best program there was in their state for the blind. That they had tried to get state funds to support the program from other sources than the set aside and that they had been unable to do so, and that if our traditional position were to prevail it would simply ruin the vending facility program in their state.

There are vending facility groups who have taken a firm position that they agree with some limited set aside for limited purposes. By and large, operators over the country are opposed to the excessive set asides which, I think all of us here would agree, are charged in some areas. To illustrate this, it is my understanding that set asides in some states take 90 percent of the net over \$800 a month. That another state with which I am familiar, takes 50 percent of the net over \$12,000 per year. Now, let's look at the sources for funds for the vending facility program. Funds may, under the law, be set aside for maintenance of vending

facility equipment, that is, for repairs of equipment in an existing vending stand. Federal financial participation is not available for the maintenance of equipment. It either must come from set aside or it must come from a state appropriation. Set aside money may be used to earn Federal dollars, that is, 20 percent set aside money will earn 80 percent Federal money under title 110 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act for replacement of equipment; that is, to replace a piece of equipment in an existing vending facility which is worn out, or broken down, or no longer serves the purpose for which it was provided.

Set aside money or state money may be used for purchase of new equipment at the rate of 20 percent state or set aside and 80 percent Federal funds under the Rehabilitation Act for purchase of new equipment; that is, for equipment installed in newly established vending facilities. And, set aside money may be used for management services; that is, again, on a 20 percent-80 percent basis. Management services encompass the types of things which are involved in training, upgrading operators, and new operators; in locating, designing, equipping, and installing new vending facilities and for the overall day-to-day routine activities involved in the ongoing vending facility program—that is, for the existing vending stands. Federal financial participation is not available for assuring a guaranteed minimum return to operators in marginal vending stands. And Federal financial participation is not available for the final item that Congress added last fall in the 1974 Amendments, that is, for pension, retirement, health insurance contributions, et cetera, that Mr. Gashel reported on earlier.

Now, this afternoon we will be considering resolutions dealing with these issues. Many operators over the country argue that

it is reasonable that a vending facility operator pay the cost of the maintenance of his own equipment since he benefits from the vending facility, he derives the income from it, and he runs it, substantially, as his own business. If he were in business somewhere else down the street, he would be maintaining his own equipment and that it is reasonable for him to do it rather than be subsidized by state appropriation. Secondly, many vending facility operators argue that for them to pay out of their own funds, their own profits, the 20 percent share that is required to earn the 80 percent Federal money for the replacement of their own equipment when it wears out, is reasonable and should not require subsidy from tax-supported or appropriated funds. At that point, by and large, operator support for the concept of a set aside fund stops, with very few minor exceptions.

Finally, the thing which I wish to call to your attention here, the American Council for the Blind has made, I believe, very substantial inroads on the organization of vending facility managers over the country. People tell me across the land that one major problem our organizations have with recruiting vending facility managers is unwavering opposition to any set aside funds, at any time and any place, and that as a result of that traditional position, we are losing the war to the ACB only in this one area. They have asked that we seriously reconsider our traditional position at this time. The resolutions which will be presented offer an opportunity to review, to think out, and to share our beliefs and our feelings about this, here, and once we have voted and arrived at a decision to proceed with that decision in the best manner that we can.

I think the thing that we have to consider then, is our position going to be that appropriated funds, collected from taxpayers,

should support a vending facility operator in the maintenance of his own equipment rather than have him pay those maintenance costs and have him pass that charge on to the customers that he serves. Should a vending facility operator pay the 20 percent required to earn the 80 percent Federal funds for replacement of his own equipment and pass that 20 percent charge on to the customers that he serves, or should all of the money be provided from general tax revenues and appropriated by the legislatures? And, finally, if we adopt a no-set-aside position under any circumstances, do we seriously jeopardize the vending facility program or place in a disadvantageous position our local affiliates and our vendor groups in the states as they attempt to bring more vending facility operators into the National Federation of the Blind as active, loyal, participating members? Thank you, Mr. President. [Applause]

President JERNIGAN. Before you leave the mike—do you have a prepared resolution?

Mr. TAYLOR. Yes, sir.

[Resolution 75-29 was then read. It is printed among the resolutions which appear elsewhere in this issue.]

President JERNIGAN. You have heard this resolution. Now, Manuel, as I understand it, the Resolutions Committee took no stand on either resolution.

Mr. URENA. That's right.

President JERNIGAN. OK. Now, to hear another view on this for nine minutes, here is Perry Sundquist.

Mr. SUNDQUIST. Thank you, Mr. President. In its vending stand report for the fiscal year ending July 30, 1974, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare indicates that there were 3,374 facilities in operation in the country managed by 3,636 blind persons. Only thirteen states do not levy a set aside charge or a fee on the

gross sales of the operators. A total of \$3,225,834 was stolen from blind vendors by the thirty-seven states and the District of Columbia. California led all the rest. Let me call the honor roll of the states which do not levy set asides: Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Idaho, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Dakota, South Dakota, South Carolina, and Washington. [Applause]

It has been argued that if a state does not provide for set aside funds for these new purposes encompassed in the 1974 Amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act, even though the operators vote for them, they would be out of luck. However, every state will begin to accumulate substantial amounts of vending machine income under the new law. Section 7(a) provides such new money shall be used for such fringe benefits and the remainder, of course, shall be used to reduce assessments against vendor income. If a state insists upon having a set aside, there must be a statutory prohibition against the use of any part of the service charge for the payment of administrative salaries. Also, of course, an upper limit must be placed in the law on the percentage of the set aside to be stolen. [Applause]

Let us look at this whole business of set asides from the point of view of rehabilitation practice itself. Historically, it has been the option of the state to decide how these blind persons who elect to enter the Business Enterprise Program shall function as operators as well as how the BEP in a given state shall be implemented. The Randolph-Sheppard Act and the Rehabilitation Act over the years have not been mutually exclusive but they have been mutually congruent. There have been considerable varied applications in the states as to the status of operators and the management of the Business Enterprise Program. To contin-

ually stress that the set aside is the only way it can be done, is to mislead almost everybody and his brother. Specifically, to imply that the continued relationship between an operator and the agency somehow can completely alter the particular blind person's status as a rehabilitation person, is a controversion of the facts. In all states, the funds used to furnish services to all rehabilitants are the same. In many states, the BEP is totally carried forth using the same earmarked funds. In some of these states, the BEP operator can and does reach the same status as other rehabilitants, that is, his rehabilitation having been completed, his obligations are then the same as any other rehabilitant — to stay rehabilitated. What confuses people, even people in rehabilitation, is that somehow only the BEP operator is supposed to self-finance or, in a sense, to pay the public, through set asides, for his rehabilitation; no one else is. [Cries of "hear, hear," and applause]

There have been all along employment provisions in the regular rehabilitation programs. In every instance, these cases use the same funding as any other rehabilitation plan and, when closed successfully, there is not one penny recovered from the client in his relationship with the rehabilitation agency. It is a weak argument, indeed, to say that a BEP operator cannot enjoy the same status as any other rehabilitant because of the tax. The fact that most states have chosen to do it one way, the set aside, only begs the question that several other states have chosen to do it another way. Example, the test of establishing half a dozen new locations a year using regular rehabilitation money is no more than the cost of providing a half dozen especially adapted vans for paraplegics the same year. [Applause]

All of the foregoing is to say that the spirit and the letter of the Business Enter-

prise Program are one and the same. It is totally irrelevant to say that BEP operators are somehow different from other rehabilitants. To require an operator to contribute a percentage of his income to state agencies is discriminatory — it is discriminatory in that rehabilitated persons of all disabilities are not required to do this. It is further discriminatory in that the money received for purposes of financing BEP is not returned in the form of goods and services to BEP operators on the same percentage or ratio as the amount paid.

The cost factor is not a valid argument. It is foolishness to think that a person can have his rehabilitation paid for under standard funding arrangements (Section 110 SSI or SSDI) and then single out a very small specific group, namely, operators and say that the self-employment provisions long applied to blind and other disabled persons do not apply.

Now that the 1974 Amendments to the Randolph-Sheppard Act are law, it seems essential for each state affiliate to push hard for changes in its own vending stand law governing state, county, and city buildings so that they parallel the Randolph-Sheppard breakthroughs, especially those provisions relating to the arbitration of grievances.

In conclusion, Mr. President, all I can say is this: "Contributions to the trust fund" or "set aside" or "services charges" are nothing but euphemisms for a gigantic ripoff of the poor blind vendors. [Shouts and loud applause]

President JERNIGAN. I would like Jim Ryan, who has headed up the Blind Merchants group, and Art Segal, who was just elected, to find mikes, because I want to put a question to each of them in a minute. I want you to hear Perry's resolution — you do have one, do you?

Mr. SUNDQUIST. Yes, sir.

[Resolution 75-30 appears elsewhere in this issue]

President JERNIGAN. OK. Now, the Chair first wishes to put a question to Mr. Sundquist and then to Mr. Taylor. If I understand, Mr. Sundquist, your resolution, if you summed it up, would reaffirm our traditional philosophy and that where there are set asides, NFB affiliates are asked to work with state agencies to try to find viable alternatives. Is that an accurate statement?

Mr. SUNDQUIST. Yes, sir. And to work toward elimination—

President JERNIGAN. Yes, and to work toward elimination of the set aside. OK. Mr. Taylor, let me ask you about your resolution. If I understand what your resolution says, it is that the traditional policy will be altered in certain respects, not in others; that is, that we work to try to eliminate set asides but that we recognize that in the meantime there are times when we need to be more flexible than we have been, and that the NFB revoke its stand of being unalterably opposed to set asides in all instances. Is that an accurate statement of your resolution? If it isn't, why tell me.

Mr. TAYLOR. Yes, sir. And let me add one other thing—

President JERNIGAN. Not in debate.

Mr. TAYLOR. It's not debate. I think that we should be clear on one thing. Perry's resolution says thirteen states and the states he listed I recognize come from the Federal report, and I guess it's heresy, but I don't believe the Federal report. I believe Delaware charges all kinds of set asides, and if you don't believe that, just ask them.

President JERNIGAN. OK. Be that as it may. Let me now put a question to Mr. Ryan? As past president of the Blind Merchants group, what is your opinion on these resolutions and this question, and how

do you think the majority of operators feel?

Mr. RYAN. Well, first of all, I'd like to agree with John about the accuracy of the Federal report. I found one showing North Carolina with no set aside and that's one of the most offensive ones. On the two points that John has in his resolution, I'd like to speak to the first one. In the thirteen states, and I'll use that number, that don't have the set aside, the operators are responsible for the maintenance of their equipment. And I believe that that's true with all of them. [Audience breaks in with cries of "No."] It's true of some of them. A good many states are going into vending and I think there's some fifteen that have gone into vending in a big way. There is not a service that you can buy if you need some help on your vending machines. Well, there is, but it's next week or day after tomorrow. Now, state employees have to be paid for this. If it's fair that a man should maintain his equipment, the state employee is going to have to be a licensing agency employee that can do that work; someone that the management can control or these vending machine programs in these states just won't go because you don't get a response from private enterprise on this. It just isn't organized for that. On the second one, my argument there has nothing to do with it.

How do the majority of the operators feel about the set aside? I dare say that the majority would be against it—or at least a majority of those I am acquainted with.

President JERNIGAN. OK. Then let me ask Art Segal for comment, if he will, on these resolutions and on this question, and, one or the other of you—I know that I came in on the tail end of the discussion and votes the other day in the Blind Merchants group and I gather that there was a very close division. I am not sure what you were

voting on but there seemed to be concern about which way it went and I gather that it went 34 to 39 either for or against something.

Mr. SEGAL. Yes, I'll cover that.

President JERNIGAN. All right. Here's Art Segal.

Mr. SEGAL. Essentially, let me sort of start with the end of the discussion. John Taylor's resolution was discussed at the meeting and at the time there were three things in his resolution, the third being the twenty percent contribution to management services. This was immediately dispensed with because I believe that everybody in the room was opposed to that and John immediately withdrew it. We then took a straw vote on the other two items. I do not remember the voting but it was strongly—but it was a strong majority in favor of maintenance being included in the resolution. The 34 to 39 vote was on replacement of equipment—it was 34 for that being in the resolution and 39 against.

President JERNIGAN. But are you telling me that the operators by a straw vote favored a set aside for the purpose of maintenance—

Mr. SEGAL. And by a narrow vote, against replacement.

President JERNIGAN. OK. Go ahead, and if you wish to speak on this, since you are head of the merchants' group we'll hear you speak now.

Mr. SEGAL. I don't know what you would call a majority of the vendors. We have 185 vendors in Pennsylvania and I believe that almost none of them is against a reasonable set aside. However, we are against certain things about the set aside and on June 12 I put the state on notice that we would withhold continuing to pay set aside for new equipment; and this has to do with Perry's discussion about contributing to

other people's rehabilitation. In Pennsylvania, set asides are only connected with equipment — purchase, replacement, and maintenance. So in Pennsylvania we have agreed and put the state on notice that maintenance and replacement—yes; purchase of new equipment—no. And as I have traveled around the country to merchants' meetings, I believe that merchants as a whole are not opposed to reasonable set asides. There are states like New York, North Carolina, and some other areas, in which operators are violently opposed and that's because of the confiscatory nature of the payment. For example, in North Carolina the operators are taxed for both halves of their social security in addition to paying set aside which covers the maintenance and replacement of equipment, management, and everything else. It's almost difficult to make more than \$145 a week in North Carolina as an operator.

President JERNIGAN. OK. Let me, before asking the two panelists how they want to proceed, see how many of you in the room have any wish to speak on these resolutions. Say "aye." [A number of "ayes."] I see.

Mr. SEGAL. I'm surrounded by vendors here who all—

President JERNIGAN. OK. Well, now, the two of you on the panel. I propose to give each of you about a minute or two in closing remarks. Do you wish to speak in the interim? [The panelists indicated that they did not care to speak at that time.] All right. Art?

Mr. SEGAL. I would like Perry to address himself to the third item, the item on recruiting which he did not address in his presentation.

President JERNIGAN. Put the question to him and let's see how he deals with it.

Mr. SEGAL. John Taylor states that the

reason we are losing the fight in recruiting vendors into our movement is the set aside question.

President JERNIGAN. All right, Perry?

Mr. SUNDQUIST. I couldn't care less. [Laughter]

President JERNIGAN. Well, now, Perry, you don't mean that you couldn't care less whether we recruit vendors.

Mr. SUNDQUIST. Well, no. But if this is the substance of why they are not joining the NFB, that's just too bad. [Cheers and applause]

President JERNIGAN. Well, let the Chair say, without engaging in this debate, give us your tired and your hungry, as the saying goes, and whoever else. I want to see us get as many people in this movement as we can and I am sure you do, too. Whether that's the policy is another question, of course.

Mr. URENA. Mr. Chairman.

President JERNIGAN. Yes, sir.

Mr. URENA. In my remarks I was going to address myself to that—[The Chair first determined that Mr. Segal was through and that he would stand ready at a microphone for further dialogue.] In California I am specifically in charge of recruiting for the training of operators, so I have had some experience. Traditionally, the organized blind have had difficulty in organizing two special groups. I think the answer is self-evident. One has been the sheltered workshop workers and one has been the vending enterprise operators. I think that it is not by strange coincidence that that is so. These are the two groups which traditionally are supervised by the agencies. Now, I think that what happens in most—not all; I know some private sheltered workshops — but traditionally these groups receive management services or their books are reviewed by the agency or they have to report to the

agency, and all that kind of thing. I think that John really misses the boat because, as a matter of fact, in Iowa, in South Carolina, and in other states, where set asides are not involved, operators are heavily recruited and they are very, very active. What we've got to do is get in there and make them stand up for their rights. [Applause]

President JERNIGAN. I believe that there is no question that the one place that the ACB has been able to make progress, in every other area they've failed, the one area has been in the vending stand business, by setting up what has been called the Randolph-Sheppard Vendors. Now, in many places, indeed, the agencies have virtually compelled blind persons to join—I think illegally so—traditionally in the sheltered shops and in the vending stands, I agree. In the sheltered shops the blind have been starved and intimidated into submission and the vending stand operators they have bought into submission very often. [Cheers and applause]

* * *

Of course, in all fairness, both resolutions call for trying to lessen set asides as soon as possible. The real gut difference in these resolutions as I see it is that one says, "Look we are continuing our policy unalterably opposed to set asides everywhere we can, period." and the other one says, "We're going to have some more flexibility in that we hope to get it down in a viable way but we're not going to unalterably oppose it." Now that's really the gut difference in those two resolutions as I see them.

* * *

Now wait a minute. We have nine people asking for the floor—more I am now told. What we have got to do is this: Take maybe not more than two or three more to a side and then let the two people who have spoken on this make closing remarks and

bring it to an end. Fairly soon you're going to see a consensus one way or another if, indeed, we haven't already seen one. Now, let me see what kind of lineup I can get . . . wait, wait. [Sound of gavel and much laughter]

Mr. E. PARKER. I have a question. Most of our people are not in Federal buildings. They want to know what difference it will make on set asides. In the past they have been more or less covered by the Federal law because there was a set aside and what effect will this have on them as being affected by the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

President JERNIGAN. Let me try to answer that question. Whether you are in a Federal building or not in a Federal building, the same regulations apply assuming that it's a Randolph-Sheppard stand. It is a Randolph-Sheppard stand if (a) it is on Federal property, (b) it is on any other property that any set aside money was used to establish, (c) if the state agency chooses to have it be a Randolph-Sheppard stand; that is, it must be in the first two instances and in the third instance, the state might choose. There are very few stands in the country that are not Randolph-Sheppard stands. Now, what difference would it make on this resolution? If the Taylor resolution passes it means that the officers and leaders of the organization will take as guidance the notion that there'll be some flexibility in the way we handle set aside money, that is, that we will not unalterably oppose set asides in all instances; it will depend on circumstances, although we will work for their elimination. If the Sundquist resolution passes, it means that we will unalterably oppose set asides, period. That's the way I see it, although where there are set asides, presumably we'd use reason in trying to eliminate them as rapidly as we could. In other words, there are some similarities in

those resolutions, but some basic difference in philosophy. What difference would it make to the local individual operator? Well, it makes a difference when a policy resolution is laid down by this organization. It means that the actions of the organization are affected and that translates itself into actions at the individual state agency level. So these resolutions are fairly important. [A number of voices asked for the floor]

President JERNIGAN. No, no. I'm going to recognize you. Look, let me ask a question of these people as I go down the line. I'd like to know if you're speaking pro or con on the Taylor resolution and let me see how we line up.

[A list was made. After more discussion it was decided by the Convention that each group — pro and con — would choose from among them two speakers, each to have the floor for two minutes.]

President JERNIGAN. All right, Sundquist group, have you got your people? Don Brown and Allen Jenkins will speak for the Sundquist contingent. Arthur Segal, and Sylvester Nemmers will speak for the Taylor contingent. Brown—you've got two minutes.

Mr. BROWN. Thank you, Mr. President. I've heard it said this week that if set aside is eliminated in the states, it will mean that the Business Enterprise Program will not expand in the future. I would like to cite from the historical record. When Mr. Jernigan came to Iowa in April of 1958, there were twelve vending facilities with set asides. Mr. Jernigan abolished set asides and today the income has more than doubled and there are twenty-nine vending facilities in the State of Iowa. [Applause] I would also like to say that if our goal is to recruit members from the ACB, it will take more than a change on this policy. We might consider changing our policy on NAC, we

might consider changing it on two-for-one travel, and we might even consider changing our policy on blindness as a nuisance. I believe that if the policy remains the same or changes, it's not going to be the primary consideration on bringing ACB members into the Federation. [Applause]

President JERNIGAN. OK. Let's go now with Mr. Nemmers.

Mr. NEMMERS. Thank you, Mr. President. In Iowa we do not have set aside. I am proud of the fact that we do not have set aside. And I wouldn't want to see set aside in Iowa. Yet, there are many operators around the country who believe in set aside for certain things as outlined in the Taylor resolution. Now, it isn't unreasonable for a man to pay for his own maintenance and equipment. We do it in Iowa although we do not do it through a set aside, but we still pay for our maintenance. It is not unreasonable for a man to replace worn out equipment—not all of it but just twenty percent of it. We've heard the argument, of course, that when a lawyer or person goes to college to become a lawyer, he doesn't have to pay back. And that is true. He does not. And we do not have to pay back for the original investment. But the lawyer does not go to the state agency when he has to have a pen fixed on his desk or a key fixed on his typewriter, or if his typewriter is worn out. He goes and buys a new one. So they are then in the same position as we are. After all, blind vendors are not in a sheltered workshop. They are independent businessmen and it is reasonable to expect them in one way or another to participate in the maintenance of their equipment through a voluntary set aside program. Now, in some states set aside is deep rooted and to go in and tell these operators, "We're going to abolish set aside," is just too much. They won't buy it. After all, what we de-

cide here, today, will not cure anything. We can pass the most pure resolution there is and it won't cure a thing. What we have to pass here today is a resolution that our many operators and many states can take home and live with and work for and I believe the Taylor resolution is it. Iowa is going to vote for that. [Applause]

President JERNIGAN. Let's see. Whose the other one? Allen Jenkins.

Mr. JENKINS. Mr. Chairman, of course we expect operators, by one way or by another way, to pay for the maintenance of their equipment as they go into business, and so on, but I don't notice around the Palmer House many Federal people around here gathering money from the management in order that they keep carpets on the floors or their microphones working. I think that to do so would be a violation of the notion that we've always striven for, namely, the free and independent operator. But beyond that, I think that we ought to review the Sundquist resolution, what it purports to do and how to go about it. Number one, it is obvious that when you take money away from an operator you reduce that operator's income. Anybody's income, when you reduce it, is harmed by that reduction. Very many operators are operating at a very small level, incidentally, of annual income. Number two, very many of the states, at least thirteen, have demonstrated that we don't lose our vending stand program when we do away with the set aside because thirteen are very successfully operating without the set aside. Among them is not just Iowa, but the man beside me was just talking about how progressive and how much earnings the stands have in South Carolina—[bell rings]—what in the world is that thing? [Roar of laughter] I didn't use up my two minutes and thirty seconds, did I?

President JERNIGAN. No, you took longer than that.

Mr. JENKINS. Well, Mr. Chairman, because of these reasons and because of the probable unconstitutionality of the set aside, I urge this Convention to go ahead and maintain our traditional view and adopt the Sundquist resolution. [Cheers and applause]

President JERNIGAN. Now, we will put on Art Segal.

Mr. SEGAL. Well, I would like to state first of all that Pennsylvania with a set aside is decreasing in stands. Connecticut without one is also remaining stable and slightly decreasing in numbers of stands, and I suspect that set aside or no set aside has little to do with the growth of the program. The energy of the agencies really has to do with that question. I do believe, though, that businessmen often band together in cooperatives to buy together, to purchase maintenance together, and a lot of other things. In the Philadelphia area especially, we buy collectively and as a result get not only rebates for our vendors individually but something around eight or nine thousand dollars into a local treasury of forty operators, right into our organization. This gives us money to operate and provide legal fees and anything else for operators. As far as recruiting is concerned, I suspect that that is also energy and since only about seven hundred of the operators in the country are directly involved in both national organizations with about three thousand left to organize, that that has nothing to do with set aside but with lack of energy expended on behalf of the organization, and too much energy exercised in oppressive tactics against the operators by the agencies that has prevented that kind of thing. I was elected this week to provide that kind of energy and leadership to do recruiting, and I hope

that no one will consider that in the voting, because I hope to be able to prove in the next year or two that we can bring thousands of vendors into the Federation movement and into strong state organizations. [Cheers and applause]

President JERNIGAN. For concluding remarks, here's Mr. Sundquist and Mr. Taylor. Two minutes.

Mr. SUNDQUIST. Two minutes. Thank you, Mr. President. I feel that set asides single out a small group of rehabilitants from other rehabilitants of the state agencies to levy a penalty against them which is, in my view, grossly unfair. Besides which, we do not wish to undercut those glorious states which operate without a set aside. In my own state, set asides are used today to set up more and more submarginal stands which means less and less money to the blind operator. Thank you. [Cheers and applause]

President JERNIGAN. All right. John Taylor has two minutes.

Mr. TAYLOR. Thank you, Mr. President. The resolution which I have been advocating this afternoon affords a bit more flexibility in the position of this organization and its affiliated state and local groups to work gradually toward the reduction and elimination, if possible, of set aside charges. It commends those states which have eliminated the set aside charge altogether and those who have kept it within somewhat reasonable bounds. I believe this organization needs, after many years, to review carefully its position on set asides. And it is obvious here that we have a division which will remain after this discussion is over. I think we all understand, once the vote is taken, that in either case we are going to need some flexibility if state groups are to work and to have time to work to find alternate sources if the set aside is to be re-

duced or eliminated. I believe, in any event, that it is not unreasonable for a vending facility operator to pay for most of the maintenance of his own equipment and that it is not unreasonable for him to pay twenty percent of the cost of replacement of his own equipment and free up that kind of money for the rehabilitation of other individuals and for the substantial expansion of the vending stand program that is called for under the new Randolph-Sheppard amendments. All of us agree that new equipment and management services ought to be paid

for as regular rehabilitation services, not with set asides. [Applause]

President JERNIGAN. All right, we'll vote.

* * *

Give heed to the vote. Sixteen for Taylor; Sundquist had thirty-four, there was one abstention. [Shouts and applause] The policy of the administration is therefore determined. . . . As I say, the matter is set, at least for another year, on policy. Anybody can bring, anytime they want, any resolution and we'll consider it.

THE REHABILITATION AMENDMENTS OF 1974: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE BLIND

OVERVIEW

BY

DR. ANDREW S. ADAMS, Commissioner
Rehabilitation Services Administration

President JERNIGAN. All right, we're now going to move into a panel called the "The Rehabilitation Amendments of 1974: Implications for the Blind." A panel discussion, which is going to be perhaps altered in view of time, because we're going to be out of here at five o'clock, period. For overview of that panel and to kick off the business, we have a person who during the past year has been a colleague-in-arms with us. We first met Dr. Adams at last year's Convention. [Cheers and applause] He came to that Convention, I think, wondering what kind of people we were and certainly he came with most of us wondering what kind of person he was. That was natural in view of past relations with some of the Federal bureaucracy—long on promises but usually not even very civil, short on performance and even less civil about it. That's unfortunate but that's the way we found it. If we were grateful for the little we got, then we were not attacked but were politely ignored. If we were not grateful, and asked

for discussion, dialogue, or even worse, our rights, then we were ignored as much as they could and in a very surly, irritating, angry manner.

We've had some other experiences. Dr. Adams came, he saw our Convention and he made us certain promises; he delivered on those promises. [Applause] He said that he would withhold NAC money until he had looked into NAC. He said that he would call a meeting between representatives of the blind and NAC to see what it was all about. Then, if he found there was justice in what he said, NAC's funds would be withheld. Meetings were held, as you know, and NAC money as of the end of the first quarter of this year was, indeed, withdrawn. [Applause] It is no more. [Applause] There are those who tried to make much of the fact that he was not harsh in his withdrawal of the money. All I know is that I saw a letter from an official organization of state agencies for the blind saying to Dr. Adams that he really ought to continue the

NAC grant. The NAC grant had been set up to be continued, and it is no more. That's all I know about it, and it seems to me that's fairly strong. [Applause]

Dr. Adams has gone beyond the negative. He has consulted with us, shown respect for our views, attempted to bolster our position as blind people. In other words, he never promised that he would do all the things we asked him to do, nor did we ask him to promise that, anymore than we ever promised we'd do all the things that he might ask us to do, and he didn't ask us to do that. What he did say was that he would listen, that he would give careful consideration to what we, as the largest organization of consumers of services for the blind, thought should be and that when we made recommendations, if they were reasonable and right, then he would go with them. Beyond that, he has shown respect for our movement and for us as a people by asking the National Federation of the Blind, as an organization, and its President as an individual, to serve as consultants to him on services for the blind. [Generous applause]

As you know, we had some discussion with Federal officialdom, both at the congressional and executive levels a few months ago, concerning his position because we felt that here was a man who had been a friend to disabled people, and a friend specifically to the blind. Dr. Adams, we are pleased to have you come back to visit with us a second time. We want to show you how we treat our friends; we also try to show our opponents how we treat our opponents. We try to be vigorous in our actions which ever way. Therefore, it's a pleasure to welcome you to this Convention as our friend and our colleague. [Prolonged applause]

Dr. ADAMS. Many of you can't see me, and I am unable to stand up. So we both have things going for us. [Applause] Thank

you, Mr. President, more than I can express, and good afternoon my dear, dear friends. [Applause] The most significant event in Washington, is the birth of Jim Gashel's baby girl, [applause] weighing five pounds, eight ounces. Jim, since I left Washington after you did, both daughter and mother are doing fine. [Applause] Last winter, after the Rehabilitation Amendments of 1974, you wrote thousands of letters on my behalf. I couldn't answer each of them, personally, but I sincerely wanted to. However, I want to, here, and personally, and publicly, thank each and every one of you. I shall never forget your support. [Applause] I am your Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services because you want me as your commissioner. [Applause] And I promise I will be *your* commissioner. [Applause] And I will fight for the things you and I believe are right for the blind of this Nation and all disabled Americans. [Applause] Last evening in the reception line of the ballroom, I felt very, very good being able to personally meet and thank many of you.

Now I want to pay honor to a man, a leader, an achiever, a winner, and a friend, Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, your President. [Applause] I now read from the 94th Annual Commencement of Drake University, May 17, 1975. "Kenneth Jernigan, Doctor of Humanities. Kenneth Jernigan has been blind since birth, and he has dedicated his life to actively instructing, rehabilitating, and contributing to the welfare of the blind. His professional career began in 1949 when he taught English in the Tennessee School for the Blind. In 1953 he joined the Orientation Center for the Blind in Oakland, California. Currently, he is the Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, President and member of the Board of the National Federation of the Blind, member of

the Iowa Governor's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, and consultant to the U. S. Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. [Applause] As a college student, Dr. Jernigan was awarded the Captain Charles W. Brown Award as the Outstanding Blind Student of the Nation. He has also received the Newel Perry Award for contribution to the welfare of the blind, and a special Presidential Award for Rehabilitation Work with the Blind. In addition to these awards and services, he is author of numerous articles on working with the blind. Born in Detroit, Michigan, Mr. Jernigan received his bachelor of science degree from Tennessee Tech University, his master of arts degree from Peabody College, and an honorary Doctor of Humanities from Coe College." I could not summarize better the outstanding and remarkable career of this man.

Today I am proud and privileged to present to Dr. Jernigan the highest award I can give from the Rehabilitation Services Administration. This is a certificate twelve inches wide, sixteen inches long. It reads, "From the Rehabilitation Services Administration, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, United States of America. Commissioner's Award. Dr. Kenneth Jernigan is hereby awarded this certificate for outstanding national contributions to programs for the blind and other handicapped Americans, as President of the National Federation of the Blind and Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind." And it's a great privilege here, Dr. Jernigan, to award you this certificate. [Much applause]

When I attended your Convention last year, I said that your 2,500 members in the audience were the most dynamic consumer group I have ever been with since becoming Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services

Administration. This year, one year later, after attending many meetings, conferences, and conventions, I can say you're one of the most dynamic and largest consumer organizations I have been with since I took office. [Applause] You are 50,000 strong. You are true champions of the cause of America's handicapped citizens. I note the recent article in the Birmingham *Post Herald* under the caption "Blind Lobby Strongest on Capitol Hill". [Applause]

Let me now highlight a dozen or so developments, and activities, achievements, and programs for the blind in the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Other than Jim Gashel's new baby, [laughter] the most significant event in the past year was the passage of the Randolph-Sheppard Amendments of 1974, providing equity and opportunity for blind vendors across the country. We should be very grateful to Senators Randolph, Stafford, Javits, Pell, Congressmen Brademas, Quie, and the many other senators and congressmen who supported this legislation. And we should take our hats off to all of you who fought so hard to get this important legislation. I will fully implement the Randolph-Sheppard Amendments. Dr. Douglas MacFarland, whom you well know and have worked with over the years, will follow me on where we are on this implementation. We will have a brand new blind-deaf center in New York this fall. I have recently visited the new center and it is very impressive, with the very latest technology. We will make it the nucleus for blind-deaf activities throughout the country. We will continue to support special projects for the older and other blind so that they will have an opportunity to live fuller and longer lives. We will continue our drive for effective, affirmative employment action, so that the blind and all handicapped Americans will have opportunities for employ-

ment in all kinds of jobs at all levels. I am fed up hearing that handicapped people should be satisfied with getting just any kind of job. [Applause] With the highest employment, the blind and other disabled can make this great Nation of ours much, much richer in so many, many ways. We will continue to carry out research and demonstration projects to find new and better ways to rehabilitate the blind and other disabled. I will work hard on such developments as optical reading scanners, electronic calculators, and demonstrations on independent living for the blind. I will drive on to tear down architectural and transportation barriers that keep the blind and other disabled from receiving rehabilitation services, medical provisions, shopping at the grocery store, going to and from work, and living a complete life without the handicaps provided by these barriers. [Applause] We have a new director of the Barriers Board, Jim Jeffers, who is eager to hear from you on where the barriers are, and how we can destroy them. I will use an iron ball if I must. [Applause] I will look closely at the comprehensive need study that has just been completed, to find how we can open doors for those with the most severe disabilities who have been shoved in a corner, but who are capable of giving and receiving so much more to and from their fellow man and lady. I will look closely at the sheltered workshops study, to be completed by September, to find how we can bring about better equality and justice for the disabled in our workshops. [Applause] This year I elevated the Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped up to the immediate Office of the Commissioner — my office. [Applause] I will continue to give the highest priority to this office. I have requested ten new positions for the Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped in Washington, and

ten more new positions in my regional offices throughout the country. I am determined to make the Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped potent. [Applause] I will join in your intense efforts to raise libraries for the blind to American Library Association standards, [applause] so that throughout the Nation, we will have the quality libraries like that for the Iowa Commission for the Blind under Dr. Jernigan, that I had the real pleasure of visiting recently. [Applause]

As a result of the Rehabilitation Amendments of 1974, the Rehabilitation Services Administration was transferred to the Office of Human Development in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Transfer has been successful and beneficial to all of us. Our new Assistant Secretary, Stan Thomas, has been a strong advocate for our Nation's minority and disadvantaged groups; and he has much experience and expertise in our kind of programs. We couldn't have a better supporter of the blind programs in the Department of HEW. He personally asked me to extend his very best wishes to you for the success of this Convention in Chicago. [Applause]

For the first time, at this Convention, I introduce publicly a new concept: the strive for interdependence above the stress on independence alone. Independence may mean isolation for many handicapped people. There is much the disabled can give to other people. And there is much other people can give to the disabled. It is a mutual partnership. Let us face it, we all depend on and need each other. [Applause] Together the disabled and the able-bodied alike, by achieving interdependence can make a better America, as we move into America's 200th Birthday—the Bicentennial. And together, through interdependence, we can make a better world. And together, through interdependence, and

not just independence, we all will be better persons, and ultimately, more independent. Since I have been at this Convention, many of you have helped me with my wheelchair and, in turn, I have tried to help many of you. Together we form an unbeatable team. [Applause] The last, but most important development I will mention for the past year, is the excellent and productive relationship that exists between your President, Dr. Jernigan, and the NFB and my office. I have fully appreciated the top-level consultation that Dr. Jernigan has provided me, and I will continue seeking his and your advice in trying to administer the highest quality programs for the blind in this country. I publicly thank Dr. Jernigan and all of you for the sound advice you have given me. [Applause] Consumer advocacy, which you truly represent, will continue to be my high priority in Washington. [Applause] And now I close for another year, thanking you for being my true friends and associates in the great task we face. Thanking you for making me a living segment of your Federation. Thanking you for having me represent you as your Com-

missioner of Rehabilitation Services in Washington. You have not let me down, and I stress that I will not let you down. [Applause] I thank you. I look forward to seeing all of you in Los Angeles next Fourth of July day. [Great applause]

President JERNIGAN. Dr. Adams, we're pleased that you've come to be with us. We appreciate you as a person and as Commissioner. You say that you will not let us down, and, indeed, you have demonstrated that. One thing that I did not mention this afternoon but that I did mention this morning when you were not in the room that is, again, a symbolic matter. It is not that the American Council of the Blind is that much account one way or the other in the total affairs of the blind, but although it was announced that Dr. Adams would be present at the Convention of the American Council of the Blind, Dr. Adams has too much respect for the organized blind movement to do that and would not do that, and I can assure you will not do that. [Applause] I simply wanted to pay recognition to the fact that Dr. Adams' actions conform to his words on these matters. [Applause]

FROM THE OFFICE FOR THE BLIND

BY

DR. DOUGLAS C. MacFARLAND, Director

President JERNIGAN. The next item is part of this same business, and I haven't decided what in the world we're going to do with these four state program officials who are supposed to be on a panel with me later, because we've got to get out of here by five o'clock and we've got one more program item we must hear. We do want to hear from the Office for the Blind. Dr. Douglas MacFarland is Director for the Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped,

Rehabilitation Services Administration in Washington. Dr. MacFarland, it's a pleasure to have you here at the Convention and we'd like to hear from you now, please. [Applause]

Dr. MacFARLAND. Thank you, Dr. Jernigan. Commissioner Adams, honored guests, and friends. It is a real pleasure for me to be here today. It's been a long time since I met with the National Federation of the Blind. Too long. I came in early

this morning and watched the proceedings, and I want to tell you, Ken, I hope you don't mind me calling you Ken because we've known each other for a long, long time, that I was very deeply impressed with the solidarity and the enthusiasm of your membership. I just wish we could have that in the rest of our groups throughout the country. [Applause] This is a large organization, but in fact, when you look at the population, the blind population of the United States, we have to admit that is an infinitesimal part of the total United States citizenry. It is my hope some day that we can all stand together on things that we believe in. In doing so we're going to get what the blind people of this Nation should have. I know we're running way behind schedule, so I'm going to breeze through some of the things and touch lightly on some of the things that we have in the Rehab Amendments of '73 and from the Amendments of '74. Hopefully we will have some time for some questions later; I know we are running out of time. The big thing in the act, as far as I'm concerned is that 1973 Amendments and 1974 Amendments both address themselves to the severely disabled. I think it's been a long time since we took a good hard look at the people we're serving, and recognized that the Vocational Rehabilitation program is, indeed, for those who have severe disabilities. This is the most significant thing to me. . . . There really isn't very much specificity in the act that one could say would directly affect the blind. But let me point out a few things: Section 103(A)(8) sets forth the provisions for mobility and rehabilitation teaching. Now we all know that this is old hat, and we've been doing this for a long time. But it's good to see it written into the act because it means that we will be emphasizing, in greater detail, these programs which are basic to our

whole vocational rehabilitation philosophy. Another important sentence, really only a sentence in the act, is 103(A)(11) which goes to telecommunications, sensory, and other devices. Right now, with the curtailment of budget, it's going to be difficult to expand this part of the act the way we'd like to see it expanded. But technological advances are occurring so rapidly that some scientists tell us that our knowledge will be more than doubled every 15 years. And if this is true, then we certainly have to keep on top of research, not only sponsor good viable research, but we have to have the money available to purchase the items, the devices, that are going to make it possible for us to make the progress that we all know is ours in the next decade. I know that you're going to be discussing affirmative action later, and I don't want to take away from the gentleman who's going to talk to you about this, but I can't help but make one remark. Again as time goes on, as the act is implemented, expanded and continued. I think Title V is going to become extremely important to the severely disabled of the United States. It's our whole package of civil rights. I don't believe that the real impact has got through to many of us who work in the field of rehabilitation. For example, it's been estimated and very conservatively so, that under Section 503 there are at least contracts amounting to over 50 billion dollars. And in Section 503, which is administered by the Labor Department, every prime contractor who has a contract of \$2,500 or more will have to have an affirmative action program. Now this has had an effect already on some of the bigger industries and some of those that are well-known to us. Some of them that have been cooperating with programs for disabled persons for many years—IBM, AT&T and several others—have already employed special-

ists on their staffs to make sure that affirmative action programs are put in place and operative. Section 504, of course, will deal with discrimination. But more than that, it sets forth a principle which has been a long time coming. Wherever any Federal money is expended, and this would encompass state programs, state agencies, organizations, institutions of higher learning, et cetera, they, too, must promulgate a program that deals with affirmative action, the employment of disabled persons, and taking into account the fact that they do have abilities and should be treated the same as anyone else and given the opportunity to move up the ladder. [Applause] I'm a very firm believer in this, I have been the recipient of some discrimination on a number of occasions in my life, as you may understand.

* * *

Let me go quickly to where we are and what we're doing in the thing that is most important to us at the moment. What's happening with the Randolph-Sheppard regulations, and other things that pertain to that section of the law. I want to make a statement here and, again, I hope that you will understand what I'm saying. The Randolph-Sheppard Act has taken a very prominent place in the past year, overshadowing a great many other things that have been going on in rehabilitation for the blind for 10, these many years. In fact, as you know, work for the blind and rehabilitation in work for the blind pre-dates, long pre-dates, the 1919 date that vocational rehabilitation in general uses as its genesis. Now, I am disappointed, really, that we couldn't have had regulations for you today, in fact, that we couldn't have had regulations on the date they were expected by Congress. But the mills of the gods grind slowly and so does the Federal bureaucracy. Many drafts have been developed and reviewed.

If you are familiar with the law, you know that we originally were mandated to work with, in the development of regulations, with departments, large departments in agencies who would be most affected by the Randolph-Sheppard Act. And so we've worked with them. And I must say, in their behalf, that I had a lot less opposition, much less fire than I expected. We have finally hammered out a set of regulations and I think, I, and the fellows who work with me in the Office for the Blind, would be the first to admit, that they're not going to please everybody. There's no way that you can develop regulations and be a popular guy. We have tried our damndest to make sure that the blind get a fair shake. Now the regulations rest with the General Counsel, they're moving forward to the Secretary's office, I hope, I'm almost fearful to say this, but I hope that we will have them sometime before the end of July. That's a long time after they were expected.

We have three mandated studies. One is the feasibility and desirability of a retirement pension and health insurance program. And fortunately we were given a year to complete this study. Please remember that all of this is a background, that while the amendments were sweeping—made many changes—there was no money even for the positions that were directed by Congress to be given to our office. So we've had this uphill battle. We've been working right with the same staff that we had and probably will be for awhile because the positions are undergoing scrutiny by the Secretary, by the Office of Management and Budget, and it's hoped that we will get them but I don't look forward to getting them very soon. Now for the feasibility and desirability study, we were able to squeeze out the money, develop the proposal, put it out for bids, and we have awarded a contract. They will be starting,

we will be able to report this on time, December 7 is the date, we will have the information. The other two studies, and I think this understandable, worked so rapidly, that sometimes we did not pay attention to the feasibility of dates. We have two studies in Section 210(A), which says that we shall develop maximum and minimum set aside standards. We're going to study this and come up with recommendations to Congress. Well, obviously you can't do this with the new set aside formula until it's in place. And we've gone forward and asked that we be given a year of experience, so that what we give to Congress is based on fact rather than on Federal fiction. We also have a mandate to study, and I'm paraphrasing here, I'm not reading from the law, the effects of vending machine income on the vending facility program, and on appropriated funds. Obviously, again, the date for this study was September, 1975, and obviously, you cannot study something in depth until it's in place. And so we've asked for a year's extension, here, too. These requests are in the process and hopefully they will be granted.

Now there are an awful lot of things that I could say to Dr. Jernigan, things that I would like to say, but I know you have a panel, I know you have another speaker and I know I've taken much, much too long already. And so, may I say to you thanks for being so kind to me last night, and courteous today. I hope that we'll develop a strong bond, a working relationship in the future and that we will be together as we move forward in the program that we all want to see advance. Thank you so much. [Applause]

President JERNIGAN. Just a minute, we have to talk about procedural matters now. Thank you, Dr. MacFarland, and if you'll stay close to a mike, we'll try to get some questions for you and Dr. Adams. We are up against, now, time constraints that we

simply can't alter. If we're going to have the banquet tonight in this room as scheduled, we're going to clear this room at five o'clock and have to clear it as quickly as all of you can, please, when we adjourn. We are now almost an hour late. We were to have discussion and reactions from Tim Cranmer, who's Director of Division of Services for the Blind in Kentucky, Dr. James Nyman, who's Director of Rehabilitation Services in Nebraska, Mr. Kenneth Hopkins, Supervisor of Services for the Blind in Seattle, Washington, Mr. John Taylor, who's Assistant Director in Iowa. Now, also, we had resolutions and discussion for 25 minutes, and then we have still to come, an item on the Affirmative Action and Employment for the Blind, which is important, which we want to hear, from Mr. Bernard DeLury, who's Assistant Secretary for Employment Standards, United States Department of Labor. What I would propose to do at this stage is this: I would propose that the members of the panel engage in whatever questioning we decide to do, and we can't have much even of that. Then we put Mr. DeLury on. Then if there's time tomorrow, we'll take up anything that we leave off today. I don't think we can do anything else.

President JERNIGAN. Okay, Manuel Urena?

Mr. URENA. Thank you, Mr. President. I'll address this to Dr. MacFarland and by and by, some other day, I'll ask Dr. Adams, too.

President JERNIGAN. Well, maybe you can ask him too while you're at it.

Mr. URENA. One of the things that we've been more concerned about is how grants come about, specifically for conferences. I think in 1970 or 1971 there were three conferences or three seminars. . . . I just recently heard there was a conference sponsored by RSA and the American Foundation,

at which they discussed such sterling topics as teaching blind people how to travel in the snow. [Applause] Pretty soon we'll have one that tells them how to do it in the rain. Now, what I'm concerned about is, is there any way that we as an organization can get in on the recommendation on these conferences, the kind of topic that'll be discussed. I for one am concerned as a taxpayer, certainly as a blind man. Now what I'm asking you is, I know you don't make the final decision, maybe the Secretary does, what will you recommend to Dr. Adams on this kind of thing?

Dr. MACFARLAND. Okay. I think what you're talking about, Manuel, is the short-term training program. There's a certain amount of the training funds, about 22 million dollars for training funds and a certain amount set aside for short-term training programs, three days, a week's duration, or whatever. Much of the money is distributed to the regions. You make application to the region for your short-term training program. Any nonprofit organization or university can make application, and apply for funds.

* * *

But there is a form, there is an application, and anyone can make an application for a grant, for short-term training programs.

President JERNIGAN. Dr. MacFarland, let me pursue this, just to this extent. Now let us assume for a moment that we deal with just this conference on the snow. Not, now, dealing with whether it's good or bad. Let's assume it's good and we thought it was bad or it's bad and we thought it's good, or something else. We are after all the largest organization of blind consumers in this country. We do have a concern with programs affecting us, we have been officially appointed by the Commissioner as a consulting organization. Let us assume that we see RSA money

spent on projects that, whether rightly or wrongly, we think are bad projects. What is our method of getting some input in this? If the Commissioner says it's the Office for the Blind, and the Office for the Blind says it's the region, and the region says well, gosh, it's central office policy, and somebody else says, well anybody can make an application, is there any way we can get meaningful input? I'm not talking about the merits of any project.

Mr. MACFARLAND. Yes, I'm not trying to pass the buck, I'm simply telling you that the money that goes to the regions belongs to the regions, and they make the decisions. I would urge you and your membership to be in touch with the region. Now as far as short-term training programs, we can make recommendations but there is a committee that decides whether projects are good or bad. The committee is made up of state directors. There's no reason in the world why that committee could not expand to accommodate other people.

President JERNIGAN. Is that committee appointed by RSA?

Mr. MACFARLAND. It's a CSAVR Committee.

President JERNIGAN. Appointed by Council of State Administrators. Is it appointed by the Council or by Rehab?

Mr. MACFARLAND. We usually look to the CSAVR to recommend members.

President JERNIGAN. But is the actual appointing done by RSA or . . . ?

Mr. MACFARLAND. The recommendation, of course, is made by CSAVR, and then accepted by RSA.

President JERNIGAN. Okay, then the actual appointing is done by RSA, right?

Mr. MACFARLAND. I would assume we would have the authority to reject if we didn't think the committee was a viable one.

President JERNIGAN. Do you have the au-

thority to expand the committee?

Mr. MACFARLAND. Dr. Adams would answer that. See, training is not my area.

President JERNIGAN. I understand, but, you are head of the Office for the Blind and therefore presumably can make recommendations, and what I'm saying is, would the Commissioner have the power to expand that committee, in your judgment.

Mr. MACFARLAND. Yes, I believe he would have that power.

President JERNIGAN. Well, would you care to tell us whether you would wish to recommend or whether you, or what your views are on recommending, some consumer participation on the committee?

Dr. MACFARLAND. Well, I think you remember when you were a member of our Advisory Committee, Ken, that I made this recommendation for the short-term training programs that year. It was most satisfactory, I was very happy with it.

President JERNIGAN. The Advisory Committee?

Mr. MACFARLAND. Do you remember when we went through the short-term training programs that were developed—Okay, we agreed there would be consumer participation, and rightfully so, I thought that was a good idea. I thought it worked out very well, and I certainly would make that recommendation from now on.

President JERNIGAN. All right. Dr. Adams would like to respond to this, too.

Dr. ADAMS. I appreciate what Dr. MacFarland has said and I'd like to add some-

thing. If you have a problem in your locality, I suggest you do two things. I suggest that if you're not satisfied with the state, that you send your message into our regional office in that particular region, as has been said. I suggest you do something more. I can suggest you write to your President here [applause] and he will then study the matter and then I'm sure with our relationship, feed that to me also. That means that I will know about your situation, personally, through our consultation relationship, our regional office will know about it in their work with the state. Now on the matter, very important, of advising on our programs, whether they be contracts or other programs, we've started this process. We're starting peer review. We have difficulty, now, responding about the exact mechanism. Jim Gashel will tell you that on issues which I feel you're all concerned, I have not hesitated to bring it to his attention and then both of us have brought it to your President's attention. So we have started the mechanism. Let us be assured it will fall better in place through the coming year, not only for the input from your organization, but also from other consumers with other kinds of disabilities. This is setting a precedent. The beauty of what we're doing is that, through our consultation with Dr. Jernigan and the NFB we've established precedent whereby all disabled Americans, regardless of the kind of disability, can get that input to determine the kind of programs that directly affect them.

Thank you.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN EMPLOYMENT FOR THE BLIND

BY

BERNARD E. DELURY

Assistant Secretary for Employment Standards

*U. S. Department of Labor
Before the National Federation of the Blind
Palmer House, Chicago, Illinois
July 3, 1975*

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN. I welcome the opportunity to talk with you today—to talk with so many of you at once—about the Labor Department's efforts to help handicapped workers.

As you are all aware, the responsibility for administering section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was given to the Secretary of Labor. He then delegated that responsibility to the Employment Standards Administration. As Assistant Secretary for Employment Standards, I take that responsibility very seriously. And I assure you that my staff accepts the challenge of the law wholeheartedly.

Section 503 is a crucial part of the Rehabilitation Act. It requires any employer with a Federal contract, or subcontract, in excess of \$2,500 to take affirmative action to hire the handicapped. That means more than just passively agreeing not to discriminate against handicapped workers. It means taking *positive* steps to provide job opportunities.

A conservative estimate places the number of handicapped persons of work force age (16 through 64), and able to work, at five and one-half million. This probably doesn't include people with cancer, heart disease, diabetes and many other diseases which are barriers to employment. All these people deserve an opportunity to develop their potential, to hold rewarding jobs and to make a contribution to society.

Since the Rehabilitation Act was signed in September, 1973, ESA (as we call the

Employment Standards Administration for short) has set up a task force to implement section 503 and has published regulations in the *Federal Register*. Because the law was amended in December, 1974, we are working on new regulations.

ESA appreciates your contributions to and interest in section 503 program developments. Some of the steps we have taken resulted from discussion with representatives of the National Federation of the Blind.

Your advocacy for the blind, and for all handicapped persons, has helped bring affirmative action to life. Your interest in developing and implementing meaningful regulations will assist us in ensuring significant affirmative action progress. And your concern about reasonable program funding and adequate initial staffing has helped us get a good start in doing our job.

You expressed your interests to us as soon as we were given responsibility for section 503, and you have followed through with visits to the Secretary of Labor, the Under Secretary of Labor, myself and key staff leadership on the task force. I in turn have visited with your officials. Such perseverance in developing a program is important.

It is through serious and repeated consultation with the National Federation of the Blind—and with all interested parties—that ESA will design, implement, and enforce an effective affirmative action program for handicapped workers. Thank you for setting such a good example.

As I mentioned, ESA is writing new regulations for section 503 to reflect the 1974 amendments and to facilitate implementation. We expect these regulations to be published in the *Federal Register* very soon. However, they first must be reviewed by the Department of Defense, the General Services Administration, and the Office of Management and Budget—as required by a presidential executive order.

Among other things, the new regulations will include the new statutory definition of a handicapped person, which is:

“Any person who (A) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities, (B) has a record of such an impairment, or (C) is regarded as having such an impairment.”

The requirement for certification for handicapped persons will also be changed. For the most part, the need for certification will be eliminated. It will still be appropriate, however, when an individual and an employer disagree on the nature and/or severity of that person's handicap. Such disagreement might arise with a bad back, for example. In these cases, a knowledgeable professional will provide a third-party determination and, if it is decided that the individual is handicapped, certification will be provided.

The new regulations will include more definitive direction on establishing acceptable affirmative action programs. Approved methods contractors can use for developing such a program will be stipulated.

Finally, the amount of reporting required of contractors under the law will be reduced. For example, contractors are to retain their affirmative action programs. They don't have to submit them to the Labor Department for approval. However, their

programs will be subject to review at any time.

The new regulations will again emphasize the uniqueness of the section 503 program. Instead of goals and timetables, we require specific affirmative action efforts. Among them we stress accommodations for handicapped workers. *For one*, accommodation should be provided in access—to the building, the work area, the lunch room, the restrooms. *Secondly*, accommodation must be made in the work area itself. A handicapped person should be able to use tools and equipment necessary for the job. *Thirdly*, jobs must be restructured for handicapped workers. Employers must consider the handicapped person's potential and assign job responsibilities based on that potential. In all accommodation efforts, employers should make a real effort to screen in—rather than screen out—the qualified handicapped worker.

Another new ESA development of interest to you is the creation of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. OFCCP, as we say for short, administers the three affirmative action programs for which ESA is responsible. That is, Executive Order 11246 which affects minorities and women, section 2012 of the Vietnam-era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act which affects Vietnam-era and all disabled veterans, and section 503.

I think that all the groups covered by these programs will greatly benefit from the OFCCP organization. Through coordination of resources we will better ensure effective monitoring and enforcement. And we can eliminate any administrative overlap and inconsistency which might occur when offices remain separate.

However, I don't want you to think for one minute that the interests of any one group will be submerged in favor of an

other group. The individuality of the three programs will not be sacrificed. Each will receive the special attention it is due.

We know that handicapped workers are a very special group with very special needs. If you feel that, for any reason, the new organization is not providing for those needs, let me know. I'll give you my phone number at the conclusion of these remarks.

Within OFCCP, we are establishing a permanent staff for section 503. There will be a total of seventy-five persons working on the program and the majority will be in the field, assigned to the ten Labor Department regional offices. The primary function of the field staff will be to serve as an information source and to investigate complaints.

A number of different groups are interested in these recent developments in the section 503 program. Among them are:

- The handicapped who are looking for jobs and upward mobility.
- Advocacy groups which support the legislation, such as the National Federation of the Blind, and who are concerned about the content of the regulations and the organization of the program. It is their business to make sure that the handicapped benefit from the law.
- Contractors who are being told that what had been good business and the proper thing for them to do is now the law. For them, affirmative action is a *must*. Behind this law and its supporting regulations are sanctions which include withholding payments, cancelling the contract, debarment from future business, and litigation to obtain restitution of back pay or retroactive employment.

We are taking into consideration the needs and interest of all these groups. And we urge that each and every one make known their feelings.

As I said earlier, the National Federation of the Blind has been especially vocal. I want to thank your leaders, among them your president, Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, and the chief of your Washington office, James Gashel, who have been so influential in helping us in the budget and personnel area for the 503 program.

Although we have not always agreed (I've never known of *any* two groups that always agree), we have certainly developed good lines of communication. ESA respects your views. ESA needs your help. As I have indicated to Mr. Gashel, we are hoping—and planning—for his participation or that of Dr. Jernigan in our orientation workshop for new staff members from the field and national office. We plan to hold that workshop soon.

The Employment Standards Administration, the National Federation of the Blind and other advocacy groups concerned with the handicapped can work together to face our mutual challenge.

Ladies and gentlemen, my phone number is (202) 523-6191. Call if you need help with a problem. We may not always have the answers, but we will always try to get them. We use your tax dollars and welcome your voice in their distribution.

Keep up the good work and help us to bring complete equity and equality — through affirmative action — to America's working men and women. A country as great as ours can ask no less than that people like you continue to give it strength.

BLINDNESS: IS THE PUBLIC AGAINST US

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY
KENNETH JERNIGAN

*President, National Federation of the Blind
At the Banquet of the Annual Convention
Chicago, July 3, 1975*

When the orange-billed seagull scares from my shadow and flees from my pass, I look up and see the sun laughing a smile on the water.

When mothers and fathers shout and hit their children for discipline, I look up and see the sun lure transient clouds to cover her face.

And when the blind man, dogless, loses his homeward path, I have seen the stranger straighten his solo way while the sun sets.

I have wondered: Is there a land where the birds are unafraid, where the little children are uncried, and the blind people see—

Where the sun won't laugh at the seagulls and hide from the children and leave when the blind man is lonely.

That poem—which appears on the wall of a California coffee house—portrays to a remarkable degree (even if only in microcosm) both the best and the worst traits of humanity: compassion, bigotry, sensitivity, obtuseness, concern, arrogance, perceptive awareness, and a total lack of understanding. Certainly with respect to blindness it exemplifies every misconception of the darkest middle ages. When the blind man (dogless or otherwise) is lonelier than others—when he has it so bad that the sun itself must flee from his plight, it is not the blindness which should be mourned but the social attitudes and the cultural heritage—the root causes of the broken spirit and the blighted soul. Second-class status and deep despair come not from lack of sight but from lack of opportunity, lack of acceptance, lack of equal treatment under the law, and (above all) lack of understanding.

Not only does the coffee house poet speak about blindness but also (doubtless without knowing it) he speaks about our reason for organizing; for if the principal problem we

face is the blindness itself (the physical loss of sight and its alleged inherent limitations) there is little purpose in collective action. If, as the poem puts it, the only solution is, "a land where the birds are unafraid, where the little children are uncried, and the blind people see," we had better pack it in and leave it to the experts. And even then, there will be no real solution; for (with present knowledge and foreseeable technology) most of us who are blind today are going to stay that way, and that is that. If this is truly the way of it, let us take such comfort as we can from the doctor, the preacher, and the psychiatrist—and let us square our shoulders and take it alone, not seeking the company of others with similar affliction, who (at the very best) can only remind us of what we are not, and what we can never become.

But, of course, this is not the way of it—not at all. Everything in us rejects it. All of our own experience denies it. We know that with training and opportunity we can compete on terms of absolute equality with the sighted, and we also know that the sighted (with education and correct information) can come to accept us for what we are—ordinary human beings, neither especially blessed nor especially cursed—able to make our own way and pay our own tab.

This is why the National Federation of the Blind came into being. In 1940 a small band of blind people from seven states met at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, to begin the movement. At first it was mostly faith and dreams, but that was over a generation ago. Today (with more than 50,000 members) we

are a nationwide crusade with local chapters in every state and the District of Columbia. At an accelerating pace we have become aware of our needs, our potential, and our identity. An increasing number of the sighted have also become aware and now march with us; but the mass of the public, a majority of the media, and most of the social service agencies still think in pre-Federation terms.

Deep down (at the gut level) they regard us as inferior, incompetent, unable to lead an everyday life of joy and sorrow, and necessarily less fortunate than they. In the past we have tended to see ourselves as others have seen us. We have accepted the public view of our limitations and, thus, have done much to make those limitations a reality. But no more! That day is at an end.

Our problem is so different from what most people imagine, that it is hard for them even to comprehend its existence. It is not the blindness, nor is it that we have lacked sympathy or goodwill or widespread charity and kindness. We have had plenty of that—too much, in fact. Rather, it is that we have not (in present day parlance) been perceived as a minority. Yet, that is exactly what we are—a minority, with all that the term implies.

Do I exaggerate? In the summer of 1972 the National Federation of the Blind held its convention in Chicago. A local television station sent a black reporter to do coverage. She went directly to the exhibit room and used most of her film on various mechanical aids and gadgets. To round out her story, she came to me and asked that I comment on the value and benefit of it all.

I responded obliquely, asking her how she would feel if she were at a national meeting of the NAACP or the Urban League and a reporter came and said he was there to film

the shoe shining and the watermelon eating contest. She said she wouldn't like it. "Well," I said, "suppose the reporter took another tack. Suppose he wanted to spend all of his time and film on an exhibit of gadgets and devices incidentally on display as a sidelight of the meeting, ignoring the real problems which brought the group together in the first place." She said she wouldn't like that either. In fact, she said, it would be worse since the question about the shoe shining and the watermelons could be easily discredited, while the other approach was just as bad but far less apparent and, therefore, probably more destructive.

I then told her about a reporter who came to one of our meetings and said, "I'd like to get pictures of blind persons bowling and of some of the members with their dogs." I tried to explain to him that such a story would be a distortion—that we were there to discuss refusal by employers to let us work, refusal by airlines to let us ride, refusal by hotels to let us stay, refusal by society to let us in, and refusal by social service agencies to let us out. He said he was glad I had told him and that it had been very helpful and enlightening. Then he added, "Now, could I see the dogs and the bowlers? I am in quite a rush."

As I told this story, the black reporter was obviously uncomfortable. She seemed truly to understand, but when I asked her if she still intended to feature the exhibits and the gadgets, she stuck to her guns. "In the first place," she said, "I've already used all of my film. In the second place my editor told me to do it, so that's the way it has to be." The television coverage appeared on schedule—usual image, usual distortion. There is nothing wrong with bowling or dogs or canes or exhibits, but it was a bad scene.

A year later (in June of 1973) the blind were again in Chicago—this time for a differ-

ent reason. The National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC) was meeting, and the blind were demonstrating and picketing. Formed in the mid-1960's by the American Foundation for the Blind, NAC symbolized (as it still does) everything odious and repulsive in our long and painful tradition — custodialism by governmental and private social service agencies, ward status, vested interest, intimidation, exclusion, and second-class citizenship. Our attempts to gain representation on NAC's Board were answered by double-talk and tokenism, by Uncle Toms representing nobody but themselves and their masters, and by threats and reprisals. Finally, we had had enough.

So when (without warning and in violation of its own bylaws and policies) NAC tried to hide from us by changing its meeting from Cleveland, Ohio, to an out-of-the-way motel in Chicago (a motel in the midst of construction and remodeling), we came to confront them. And not just a few of us, but the blind of the Nation. It was short notice and difficult doing, but we came—hundreds of us, from all over the country: California, New England, the deep South, and the Midwest.

It was a day of dramatic importance. It was the first time in history that the blind as a people (not just a local group or a given segment but the blind as a people) had mobilized to take to the streets for collective action. There were state delegations, placards and signs, marches in downtown Chicago, and a rally at Civic Center Plaza. Was it newsworthy? By every test known to journalism, the answer would have to be yes.

Yet, the *Chicago Tribune* for Thursday, June 21, 1973, carried not a single line about the demonstrations. It was not that

the *Tribune* forgot us. Far from it. There was not just one, but two stories about the blind. And what were these stories that were of such importance as to be more newsworthy than the first national demonstration by the blind in history? One was headlined "Busy blind man finds time to help children." The other was captioned "Blind, he directs music in city school."

What a commentary! It was all there. The blind are especially talented in music. They are also burdened and deprived. Therefore, when one of them (instead of just doing the normal thing and receiving) turns it around and gives to others (particularly, children), it has human interest and news value. What would have happened if Martin Luther King had been leading the first black demonstrations in Chicago and the papers had ignored it—printing, instead, "Busy black man finds time to help children" and "Black, he directs music in city school"? I think you know what would have happened, and so do I. There would have been a furor of massive proportions. Yet, the incidents I have related passed without notice or ripple, almost as a matter of routine.

What I have said must be seen in perspective. The *Tribune* writers and the other members of the Chicago press were not trying to put us down or conspire against us. They were calling it as they saw it, writing what tradition had taught them to write. Like any other cross section of society, they doubtless were (and are) people of integrity and goodwill. It was not a matter of morals or motives, but of comprehension. It was all tied up with their notions about blindness. Pathos, compensatory talents, musical ability, inspiration, bravery against odds, world of darkness, heartrending tragedy—these they (and even their editors) could understand: run-of-the-mill, good human

interest, no sweat. But the blind as a minority? Discrimination? Marches? Confrontation with the social service agencies, the very people who were trying to help the blind? Ridiculous! The reporters couldn't understand it, and (at least, at the emotional level) they didn't believe it. So how could they write it? And even if they did, how could their editors approve it, or the public buy it? Forget it. Don't think about it. Let it alone.

Of course, the attitudes of the press are representative of the broader society, and the situation is certainly not unique. It is exactly the way the blacks were treated 50 years ago. They were lumped together and seen as a single caricature—good natured, irresponsible, rhythmic, shiftless, and a mite dishonest—second-class all the way. A black person was never shown in a straight role on the stage or in the movies but only as a foot-shuffling, jolly simpleton. It was Amos and Andy and Uncle Remus and Aunt Jemima; and not only the blacks but all of us will bear the scars for generations to come because of the failure to understand, the lack of concern to care, and the absence of the courage to act. Fifty years ago it was the blacks. Today it is the blind. But we are organized, and we are on the move. We want no strife or confrontation, but we will do what we have to do. We are simply no longer willing to be second-class citizens. They tell us that there is no discrimination—that the blind are not a minority. But we know who we are, and we will never go back.

Let you think I am picking on Chicago, let me say that New York was about the same. In July of 1973 (only a month after the NAC demonstration in Chicago) the largest group of blind people ever to assemble anywhere in the world up to that time met in New York. For almost a week we

discussed our hopes and our problems—planned and dreamed. Some 2,000 of us marched on NAC headquarters. There was a considerable amount of local radio and television coverage, and a little in the papers. Nationally there was hardly a ripple. I can only explain it as before.

It was not conspiracy or deliberate put-down. In some ways it was worse, for an individual can be made ashamed of prejudice and repression—but rarely of charity and kindness. They didn't understand it; they didn't believe it; and (above all) they didn't know how to write it. It didn't fit the image and the preconception.

Sometime back a local student chapter of the National Federation of the Blind undertook to analyze advertisements mentioning blindness. An ad to help people stop smoking came to their attention and resulted in the following correspondence:

CAMPANA CORPORATION
Division of Purex Corporation Limited
Batavia, Illinois

DEAR SIR: At our April meeting, we read part of an advertisement from your *University Plan to Help People Stop Smoking*. The reading states in part: "Try smoking with your eyes closed and see how much of smoking is visual. Blind people rarely smoke, not only because of fire danger, but because they are not influenced by these visual aspects of smoking." Since blind people do smoke as much and as often as their sighted friends, and since blind and sighted alike have little conscious concern for the fire hazard involved, we found your advertisement of BANTRON both inaccurate and annoying.

We hope that you will reread your information concerning BANTRON, and see the misconceptions about blindness in it so they may be corrected.

Thank you very much.

A courteous letter—not unreasonable or belligerent or full of recrimination. Back came the reply, loud and clear—saying, perhaps, more than its author intended or realized:

Thank you for your letter of April 29. Your comments about the sweeping generalizations of blind people not smoking are well-taken, and did indeed cause me to study the package directions for Bantron. Although I have yet to know a blind person who did smoke, I will concede the point on the basis that (a) you are more expert on the subject than anyone here, and (b) any such generalization such as blind people fearing fire, left-handed people being awkward, black people being shiftless, Italians gangsters, Jews cunning, Germans warlike, or Iowans as cornrowers is by nature indefensible and inaccurate.

Unfortunately, Bantron is not a high volume product and it may be some time before package directions are next redesigned, and some time after that before the new directions achieve distribution. In fact, it may be years before your suggestions bear tangible fruit. But they have been considered and will be acted upon when the time finally arrives.

A casual (one might almost say a cavalier) response. A rather glib admission that the statements about blindness in the ad were probably false and that nobody around the office had any real information on the subject—or, for that matter, cared to have any, one way or another. No recognition that lives might have been damaged or opportunities lost. Only the godlike statement that, "... it may be years before your suggestions bear tangible fruit. But they have been considered and will be acted upon when the time finally arrives." What insensitivity! What contempt! What arrogance!

What irrefutable proof of the absolute necessity for the National Federation of the Blind! Yet, they tell us that there is no discrimination—that we are not a minority. But we know who we are, and we will never go back.

Not only must we deal with the ad writers and the working press but also with Mr. Magoo—lovable Mr. Magoo. Because he is almost blind he bumbles and blunders through a series of bloopers—walking into telephone poles and apologizing to them because he thinks they are people, patting the

tops of fire plugs and speaking to them as children, and walking up half-finished skyscrapers to the brink of disaster and ruin. It's funny because he can't see and makes such stupid goof-ups. Never mind that blindness isn't like that and that no blind person in the world is so incompetent or stupid as to hit a telephone pole and believe it's a human or think the top of a fire plug feels like the head of a child or wander up the girders of an open building. It fits the stereotype, so it's hilariously comical.

But what does it do to blind people—to our public image and our private lives? A few weeks back I received a call from a blind woman in Indianapolis. She said, "The other day I was at the home of a friend, who is also blind, and her four-year-old son was watching Mr. Magoo on television. He turned to his mother in hurt and bewilderment and said, 'Mother, why are they making fun of you?'" My caller went on to tell me that later that same week she was walking down the street when a small child spit on her and said, "You're old Mr. Magoo." She was so shaken by the two incidents coming together that she called to ask what the Federation could do about it.

Of course, this negative behavior is not surprising from small children, or even from the public at large; but surely we have the right to expect better from the social service agencies, the very people who are supposedly knowledgeable and established to help us. Yet, an outfit in Seattle calling itself Community Services for the Blind (ultrarespectable and approved by the United Way) decided this spring to make Mr. Magoo the principal focus of its public relations and funding. The leaders of our Washington affiliate protested, but to no avail. A blind man on the Community Services board (Uncle Toms are, indeed, pathetic; and we have our full quota) thought it was funny, and

even constructive. But the board's sighted president put it all in perspective:

The advertising message [he said a letter to one of our members] is especially directed at people who are *responsible* for the blind—not the blind themselves. We don't feel the blind person will tend to identify himself with Mr. Magoo, necessarily; in fact, many may not even know who he is. . . . If there is any kind of a negative aspect in the fact that Mr. Magoo has poor eyesight, it is all the more effective, just as a crippled child on a muscular dystrophy poster is more effective than a normal child. [Emphasis added.]

What a damning self-indictment! What an ironic commentary on the end of an era and the death of a system. Yet, they tell us that there is no discrimination—that the blind are not a minority. But we know who we are, and we will never go back.

To round out the picture of the public mind, consider the following recent examples: A man wrote to me a few months ago saying that he would like to buy a cat or dog for every blind person in Colorado Springs. "I saw a young blind boy," he said, "with a white cane and a puppy dog. He seemed so happy. If you think it would help I would be glad to see every blind person in Colorado Springs has a pet. Cat or dog."

A dental hygiene student wrote to me from Fresno, California: "I am working on a research paper," she said, "concerning the special needs of visually handicapped or blind people with regard to dental care. I hope to determine: (1) how the dental procedure needs to be altered to accommodate them, and (2) special dental problems of these patients."

Recently a blind woman was in the hospital for gall bladder surgery. A tape on the foot of her bed was inscribed in large letters: "Patient is blind but self-sufficient." It's all tied up in the word "*but*." Am I quibbling? Not really. Is it subtle? Not very.

An expert on penology and social reform

wrote to me to say that, in his opinion, the blind (regardless of their misdeeds) should not be put in the penitentiary. "If the seriousness of their offense merits incarceration," he said, "they should be dealt with in a special manner." In other words, even in the "big house" we should be second-class and segregated.

The author of a book on the teaching of medical transcribing wanted her work put into Braille. "I wrote you," she said, "because I have watched the teaching of this subject to the blind over a period of years and it is unnecessarily painful and lengthy. They do make first-rate transcribers and always seem so pathetically grateful for a chance to learn."

A religious organization circulates a card called "Courtesies of Gentleness for the Sighted in Contacts with the Blind." It says:

A handshake to a blind person is like a smile to a sighted person. So shake hands on greeting and on leaving your blind acquaintance. . . . Never fill to the brim a cup given to a blind person; it is too hard to keep on an even keel. Give him a refill instead. . . . Don't express sympathy for a blind person in front of him. . . . In motoring, guard against slamming the car door on the blind person's hands. Also see that he doesn't extend his arm or hand outside the car. . . . Never force an approaching blind person to give you the right-of-way, for every time he has to deviate from his course, he loses his bearings. . . .

In other words the blind can't plan or do for themselves. Do it *for* them, and think for them, too. And don't express pity for them—at least, not to their faces. Gentle and courteous all of the way.

Incidentally, the Federationist who sent me this card said: "I find it demeaning and offensive."

A doctor at the Mayo Clinic wrote: "I am sorry to say she is blind and cannot be helped. Anything you can do to make her life easier would be greatly appreciated."

From Pennsylvania comes this:

Today I was advised by the Department of Labor Inspections Division that under the new life safety measures, which will emanate from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, it will not be possible to allow a blind person to live on the second floor of a boarding house having more than three guests unless the building totally conforms with the federal specifications and standards.

Southern College, located in Orlando Florida, announces: "Tuition for all students is basically \$417 per quarter. There is an additional quarterly fee of \$125 for visually-impaired students."

In 1972, James Reston, the well-known syndicated columnist, commented on Senator Eagleton's forced withdrawal from the Democratic vice-presidential nomination: "This is not primarily Eagleton's fault," Reston said, "but the system's. That system is very compassionate to human beings whose age and health interfere with the efficient execution of their work. It tolerates Supreme Court justices who are in serious ill health or who are even almost blind."¹

The key word (as I am sure I don't have to tell you) is *even*. That "even" is at the center of our problem as blind people. It takes for granted (as an obvious commonplace, needing no argument) that the blind are unable to perform competently as Supreme Court justices; in fact, that it is ridiculous even to assume that they might; and that any system which tolerates such manifest irrationality can only be explained on the basis of compassion.

Compassion, indeed! The compassion is often misplaced. Recently, for instance, we held a luncheon for employers so that they could get acquainted with blind job applicants, and the East Moline, Illinois, Metal Products Company saw no reason to come.

"Because of the type of business we are in," their letter said, "metal stampings and weldments involving punch presses, shears, brakes, and welders, we feel that we have nothing to offer the blind inasmuch as we have nothing in a counting or packaging type of work."

The irony is that one of the people attending the luncheon (totally blind from childhood) works every day shearing steel and operating presses. He has done it for 15 years and is considered the best in the plant.

In Michigan in 1970 Tom Munn (a blind man) took a State Civil Service examination for the position of mechanic. He passed with a score of 96, and his name was placed on the register. He was not offered employment; others (with lower scores) were hired. In 1972 the Civil Service Commission created a separate list for the handicapped. Munn's name was transferred from the open register to the separate list, and his score was reduced from 96 to 70—which (regardless of performance) was the grade to be given to all so-called "successful" future blind applicants. Munn requested that his performance be evaluated. The request was refused. In 1974 (acting on his own) he secured a work trial evaluation with the Motor Transport Division of the Department of Management and Budget. He did the job without difficulty. The results were ignored. In 1975 (his patience finally exhausted) he contemplated a lawsuit. Officials of the State agency for the blind (the very people charged by law with the duty to help him) allegedly tried to coerce him into silence. Tom Munn and the National Federation of the Blind have now brought action in the federal courts against both the State agency and the Civil Service Commission. Yet, they call it compassion and say we are incompetent. They tell us that there is no

¹Reston, James, "System at Fault in Eagleton Case," *The Kansas City Star*, Kansas City (Mo.), July 31, 1972.

discrimination—that the blind are not a minority. But we know who we are, and we will never go back.

Surely all of this is sufficient, but it is only illustrative. Southern Illinois University plans to make a study of the dating and mating selection patterns of the blind; the Minnesota Braille and Sight Saving School plans a course in sex education and wants specialized materials and techniques; and the *National Enquirer* puts it all together in a November 11, 1973, article entitled "Finds Blindness Upsets Sexual Functioning."

The sex drives of the blind, [the article says] are upset by their inability to see light, states a West German researcher. Dr. H. J. von Schumann, of Dusseldorf, said he found that irregular menstrual cycles in blind women and loss of sexual ability in blind men seem related to their inability to see light. The hormone-producing system controlled by the pituitary gland appears to need stimulation by light if sex hormones it produces are to be kept at adequate levels.

Hardened as I am to ignorance and superstition, I still find it difficult to know exactly what to do with that one. I confess that I was reluctant even to bring it to you at all for fear some of the sighted (lacking first-hand experience) might be tempted to believe it. The demands of modesty and the wish to be seemly would seem to rule out any attempted refutation by personal laboratory performance, and the customs and laws of the day make it inadvisable to stage mass exhibitions to place the matter in perspective. So I guess the best I can do is this: Pick any random hundred of us, and put them alongside any random hundred of them; and I believe we will acquit ourselves with credit and pleasure—probably with volunteers to spare. Ask the sighted with the background to know.

What a dreary picture! We are dogless and lonely; we can't enjoy smoking; we are Mr. Magoo; we need pets to keep us com-

pany; we have different dental needs; we must be segregated, even in the penitentiary; we should be pitied, but not to our faces; we cannot live on the second floor of a boarding house; our college tuition is higher; we cannot shear steel or operate presses; we cannot compete in the Civil Service but must be content with a separate list and a score of 70; and, finally, we are even inadequate for the joys of sex. It would seem that all that is left is to pack it in; and even that is taken care of in an article on the right to death by choice appearing in the January, 1974, *Atlantic*: "I do not wish," the author says, "to survive any accident or disease resulting in vision too impaired to see or read. A world without beauty seen is no world for me. A life without freedom and movement is no life for me. If age and illness deny me these, I choose death."²

So where does all of this leave us? In the first place it leaves us with the need for perspective; for as the saying goes, we have never had it so good. Despite the exclusions and the denials, we are better off now than we have ever been. It is not that conditions are worse today than they were ten or twenty years ago, but only that we are more aware of them. In the past we wouldn't have known of their existence, and even if we had, we wouldn't have been able to do anything about it.

Today we are organized, and actively in the field. The sound in the land is the march of the blind to freedom. The song is a song of gladness. Yes, there are discriminations and misconceptions; but there are also joy and promise. The old is dying, and the new is at hand.

It is true that not all sighted people have

²Maguire, Daniel C., "Death by Chance, Death by Choice, *Atlantic*, Boston (Mass.), Jan. 1974.

goodwill toward us, but most do. As we begin to move toward first-class citizenship (especially, as we insist upon our rights), we will inevitably provoke hostility; but we will also inspire understanding and respect.

If we simply go forth with chips on our shoulders and bitterness in our hearts, we will lose. We must have greater flexibility and more positive belief in ourselves than that. There is a time to fight and a time to refrain from fighting; a time to persuade; a time to take legal action; a time to make speeches; a time to educate; a time to be humble; a time to examine ourselves to root out arrogance, self-deception, and phony excuses for failure; a time to comfort our fellow blind; and a time to stand unflinchingly and uncompromisingly with the fury of hell against impossible odds. Above all, we must understand ourselves and have compassion in our hearts, for the sighted as well as for our fellow blind—and, yes, even for ourselves. We must have perspective and patience and the long view; and we must have the ability and the willingness to make sacrifice, and the courage to refuse to wait.

We must destroy a system which has kept us in bondage, but we must not have hatred in our souls for that system or that bondage—for the bitterness will destroy, not our enemies but us. We must recognize that the system was an indispensable element in making us what we are, and, therefore, that its chains (properly seen) are part of our emerging freedom—not to be hated or despised but to be put aside as outdated and no longer to be borne.

As we look ahead, the world holds more hope than gloom for us—and, best of all, the future is in our own hands. For the first time in history we can be our own masters and do with our lives what we will; and the

sighted (as they learn who we are and what we are) can and will work with us as equals and partners. In other words we are capable of full membership in society, and the sighted are capable of accepting us as such—and, for the most part, they want to.

We want no Uncle Toms—no sellouts, no apologists, no rationalizers; but we also want no militant hellraisers or unbudging radicals. One will hurt our cause as much as the other. We must win true equality in society, but we must not dehumanize ourselves in the process; and we must not forget the graces and amenities, the compassions and courtesies which comprise civilization itself and distinguish people from animals and life from existence.

Let people call us what they will and say what they please about our motives and our movement. There is only one way for the blind to achieve first-class citizenship and true equality. It must be done through collective action and concerted effort; and that means the National Federation of the Blind. There is no other way, and those who say otherwise are either uninformed or unwilling to face the facts. We are the strongest force in the affairs of the blind today, and we are only at the threshold. We must operate from a base of power—yes; but we must also recognize the responsibilities of power and the fact that we must build a world that is worth living in when the war is over—and, for that matter, while we are fighting it. In short, we must use both love and a club, and we must have sense enough to know when to do which—long on compassion, short on hatred; and, above all, not using our philosophy as a cop out for cowardice or inaction or rationalization. We know who we are and what we must do—and we will never go back. The public is not against us. Our determination proclaims it; our gains confirm it; our human-

ity demands it. My brothers and my sisters, the future is ours. Come! Join me

on the barricades, and we will make it come true.

THE KURZWEIL READING MACHINE

BY

RAYMOND KURZWEIL

*President, Kurzweil Computer Products, Inc.
Cambridge, Massachusetts*

I am very pleased to be here and I can honestly say that the last few days have been very inspiring and very enlightening to me. Dr. Jernigan, and members of the National Federation of the Blind, I would like to thank you for inviting me to attend your Convention and to address the assembly this morning. It has been a special pleasure meeting and talking with many of you these past few days and I trust there will be many more discussions in the months ahead.

I would like to present, in the brief time we have, a quick overview of what we call the Kurzweil Reading Machine: what it is, how it works, why we selected the approaches that we did, and, finally, some incomplete answers to some interesting questions like how much will it cost, and when will it be available. Then I would like to say a few words about the NFB and the role that it is playing.

Before describing what we have developed, I would like to describe briefly the goals of the project with the hope that there might be some relationship between the two. In the very early stages of the project, when it consisted only of myself doing some general thinking and reading about the problem of reading for blind persons, it occurred to me that the various reading systems available all suffered from one or more critical limitations. In the case of Braille and talking book, while rapid reading rates are attainable, the variety and range of available

material has been limited. I was talking to Kurt Cylke of the Library of Congress yesterday, and he mentioned to me that of the thirty-to-forty thousand new titles printed each year, only about three hundred found their way into Braille. Direct translation devices, on the other hand, like the OPTACON, which was in a fairly early state of development at the time, while allowing access to the full range of virtually all printed matter, were limited by the extensive training necessary, its requirement for a high degree of tactile sensitivity and perceptual skill, and slow reading speeds. It also occurred to me at the time, that I was living in a society where the level of technological innovation had no parallel in history. It seemed to me unfortunate that very little of the Nation's technical skill and creativity was being directed toward solving this important problem. It seemed at the time that the problem could be solved and that at the appropriate time, I, together with a group that I hoped to gather, would make an attempt to develop a reading machine with the following characteristics:

First, it appeared imperative that the reading machine read ordinary inkprint, that is to say, books, magazines, letters, memoranda, most any printed material. It was clear that if Congress multiplied its Library of Congress funds tenfold, there was no way in which the Braille and talking books could compete with the incredibly large number and diversity of materials available

in print. Even if the number of books and magazine titles were increased by one or two orders of magnitude, printed material of limited distribution such as correspondence, memoranda, professional journals, and the like, it would still be generally unavailable. This is not to say that Braille and talking books have not and do not continue to provide invaluable service. The need was, however, and still is, for some means of access to the ordinary printed page.

The second characteristic that I felt to be essential, was that the machine must be easy to use. After all, reading is only a means to an end. One should be free to use one's energies to comprehend and reflect upon the content of one's reading and not be required to use all, or even a significant portion of one's concentration on the process of reading itself.

The third requirement was that it not require special skills or ability. Expressed in another way, I felt it important that the machine require very little training, if any, and that virtually any blind person should be able to use it.

The last, and a very important requirement, was that the machine provide rapid reading rates.

These then were the goals of the project: the development of a reading machine that would be accessible to almost any blind person, that would enable the blind person to read most printed material easily, and quickly. With these goals in mind, I formed Kurzweil Computer Products two years ago with the express purpose, and this has been and continues to be our only purpose, of building a reading machine that would implement these goals. I am pleased to be able to say that, while there is still work to be done to perfect the device, we have within the last two years developed a machine that

I believe fulfills these goals. We have developed a reading machine that converts the ordinary printed page, books, letters, magazines, reports, in most standard type styles and sizes of print, into comprehensible, full word, synthetic English speech at two hundred words per minute.

I would like to describe the machine to you briefly. The reading machine comprises two physical units—a desk-top reading unit and an electronic control unit. The two units are connected by a flexible cable. The desk-top reading unit, which is the only unit that the user interacts with, is about eighteen inches high, two feet wide, and two feet long. The electronic control unit is plugged into an ordinary 117-volt electric outlet and requires no special wiring. To use the machine the user places the printed material face down on a glass plate which forms the top surface of the desk-top reading unit and presses the start button that indicates that he is ready to start reading. After the start button is pressed, the rest is automatic. An electronic camera in the reading unit scans the printed material and transmits it to the electronic control unit which contains a minicomputer. The electronic control unit isolates the character forms, recognizes the letters, and computes the proper sequence of speech sounds, and generates the synthetic speech output, which I will play for you in a few minutes. The reading machine will continue to scan and speak each text line in turn. Tracking the text line is performed by the machine. The user has the option of controlling the movement of the camera, and hence the sequence of the reading, with a set of user control switches. He can, for example, repeat the line just read or the page just read, go forward or back one or several text lines, as well as control the reading speed, pitch, and volume. In addition, if the user encounters

a particular word which he finds difficult to comprehend when first heard, he can back up, temporarily switch the machine into spell mode, and hear the word spelled letter by letter. Having understood the difficult word, he can switch back into full word mode and resume reading at a rapid rate. By using the controls, the user is able to assume an active role in controlling the sequence of his reading while leaving the tiresome task of tracking the individual text lines to the machine.

I would like to take a minute and discuss with you in general terms the nature of the technology we developed to implement the reading machine because I think it will clarify the capabilities of the device. The first half of the reading machine is the character recognition system which is responsible for isolating individual character forms on the page and recognizing them. There have been, for many years, commercial character recognition machines on the market that are capable of scanning and recognizing printed letters. A number of researchers in the blind reading machine area have been waiting for a commercial character recognition machine to come along that would be suitable for a reading machine for blind persons. It has been apparent to us, ever since we started this project, that such a device is not going to come along and that a specific research effort would have to be launched to develop a character recognition system for the specifications needed for a reading machine for blind persons. The specifications are quite different from the characteristics for commercial character recognition machines. For one thing, the commercial machines are very fast, often with a throughput of several hundred documents per minute. While we certainly wanted speed significantly higher than the direct translations aids, these ultra-high commer-

cial speeds were not needed. Secondly, the accuracy rates on commercial machines are exceptionally high, on the order of one error in ten or twenty thousand characters. This is the result of the fact that the main commercial application is in the area of processing financial documents where errors can be catastrophic, at least to a company's accountant. For the blind reading machine, a low error rate is also important because excessive error would be distractive and annoying. The accuracy rate, however, does not have to be as extraordinarily high as that required for commercial application.

On the other hand, a reading machine for the blind requires two characteristics not found in the commercial devices: first, it must be true with multi-fonts, that is, it must recognize almost all standard type styles. And it must do this without requiring the blind user to identify the type style being read, as some proposals concerning blind reading machines have suggested that the blind user be required to do. The Kurzweil user does not have to identify the type style he is reading and he would be hard pressed to do so if so required. It would not be reasonable, therefore, to expect blind readers to make such identification. This is especially true in light of recent proliferation of new type styles that have resulted from the new so-called cold typesetting techniques. Secondly, character recognition for a reading aid must be reasonably inexpensive. Commercial machines that recognize one type style start at around \$30,000, and those that recognize multiple styles of type cost several hundred thousand dollars, with some costing over one million dollars.

In summary then, a character recognition machine for use in a reading machine for blind persons does not require the high speed and accuracy of the character recognition systems designed for commercial applica-

tion, yet it does require true multi-font capability and low cost. In other words, it needs dramatically different characteristics and the researchers who are waiting in the commercial character recognition area, to come up with something suitable for the blind, will have to wait a long time. Developing a suitable character recognition system has been a main focus of our research effort and we have developed a system with satisfactory speed and accuracy with true multi-font capability and at a reasonably low cost. [Applause]

The second major focus of our research has been the development of a suitable speech output. I'll only touch upon this lightly because of the time constraint. I do want to point out that the main problem is not in generating the speech sounds themselves but in determining the correct pronunciation of each word. The conversion between the way words are spelled and the way they are pronounced is quite complex in English and all I can say is that it is too bad that we don't speak Spanish in this country because the conversion would have been a lot simpler. There have been suggestions in the literature that an OCR, that is, an optical character recognition, based reading machine for the blind produce output in either spelled letters or so-called phonetic speech, where the words are pronounced the way they're spelled. Both of these approaches would result in devices which would require extensive training and which would provide limited reading speed and would not, therefore, be significantly better than the direct translation machine.

In this area, we have developed a system which converts letter sequences into phonetic sequences with a high degree of accuracy using only a small amount of computer memory and a minicomputer. Conversion systems centers are in a set of one

thousand linguistic rules which we devised as a result of an extensive analysis of the pronunciation of English. There was, incidentally, very little of value that we were able to use in this effort in the linguistic literature. Our best source document was our *Random House Dictionary*. In addition to the phonetic rules, we have also programmed the exceptions to the rules. One last point about the speech output is that the machine does perform a relatively simple analysis of sentence structure to assign a stress contour over each sentence. We do not by any means compute full sentence parsing, that is, we do not determine the part of speech for each word in the sentence but we do analyze certain syntactic features to determine the assigning of stress. The result is an intonation pattern that is more pleasing to listen to than the monotone.

About one year ago, and about one year after our organization was formed, we developed initial prototypes of both the character recognition system and the speech system. After considerable refining, last January we integrated these two systems into a single laboratory model of the reading machine. We were able at that time to go directly from a printed page to full word synthetic speech. We have continued to refine the system since that time. On April 8 we gave a demonstration to the National Federation of the Blind, represented by Jim Gashel and Al Schlank. We are currently implementing two final features: capability to track from one line to the next automatically; and an algorithm which will separate letters that physically touch one another on a page. We hope to place test models of the reading machine in the field around the end of this calendar year. We will be placing test models under contract with the U. S. Office of Education, at the Perkins School for the Blind, and in the

Boston School System. We have also applied to the Rehabilitation Services Administration and the Veterans Administration to place reading machines at other suitable test sites. In addition, we are planning to place test units with the National Federation of the Blind [applause] to be used in a significant human engineering study which I want to describe in detail in about two or three minutes. We hope to follow all this first-year testing with a second year of testing involving a somewhat larger number of machines.

Upon the successful completion of these testing programs, which we hope will be in about two years, we hope to introduce a reading machine with a moderate production level of several hundred units. At that time, we anticipate a price in the neighborhood of ten to eleven thousand dollars which would be suitable for the institutional market: libraries, schools, places of business, universities, perhaps even some blind service agencies. The price, however, will come down rapidly. The bulk of the cost of the reading machine is the visual computer logic and memory. With the rapid technological advances in this area, the prices for these components has been declining rapidly. The most dramatic example which comes to mind of this phenomena is the pocket calculator which was introduced into the market at several hundred dollars and is now selling for ten percent of its original cost. The reason for the price drop is that the digital components used in calculators, the same type of components that comprise the reading machine, are rapidly falling in price as the fabrication techniques continue to improve. Another dramatic example of this trend is computer memory, which, despite the fact that we require a relatively small amount of memory for a device of this complexity, nevertheless comprises a significant

portion of the reading machine cost. Prior to ten years ago, each bit of memory required a discrete component. Now, components exist that contain four thousand bytes on a single chip. And memory chips are being developed with even greater densities. That means fewer memory chips required, which in turn means not only lower component costs but reduced assembly costs, higher reliability and smaller size as well. In summary, the price will come down rapidly, and we hope that within a few years after its introduction, the reading machine will be within range of individual purchasers. I do want to point out that the exact amount of time for this to happen depends on many unpredictable factors such as production level, the speed with which component technology continues to evolve, as well as the research funds we have available to take advantage of more efficient components. For this reason it is difficult to predict accurately the speed with which the price will fall; but it is the goal of the project to provide a high performance reading machine which will be within the economic reach of individuals. [Applause]

I would like to play you a tape of the reading machine, after which I would like to say just a few words about the relationship of the NFB to the project. The tape was made shortly before I came out here and, in honor of the Bicentennial, this is a brief tour through American history. The tape contains seven quotes from famous Americans. Each quote is typed in a different type style. I have the sheet here which was read by the reading machine to make this recording, if anybody wants to come up afterward and look at it. I was listening to the tape yesterday and I realized that I typed several of the quotes wrong. I just want to say that standing here beneath these seven American flags on this Fourth

of July nothing unpatriotic was intended. Now, most of you have never heard the reading machine speech before. Persons with no exposure to this synthetic speech vary in their ability to comprehend it. However, anyone who has listened to the synthetic speech for one or two hours is able to understand it without difficulty. So it is not hard to get used to but it does take a few hours of familiarization. We will in fact provide with the reading machine a series of what we call familiarization tapes which provide the necessary exposure to the synthetic speech prior to actual use of the machine. Not having had this exposure, many of you may have difficulty comprehending it. Also, I am not sure what the public address system will do to it. I'll play the tape twice; maybe you will get it better the second time. [The machine then read the following passages quite intelligibly, sounding much like a person whose native tongue is Spanish reading English]

Give me liberty or give me death

We have nothing to fear but fear itself

Damn the torpedoes; full speed ahead

Speak softly and carry a big stick

I never saw a man I did not like

Ask not what your country can do for you

Ask what you can do for your country

Government of the People, by the

People, for the People, shall not perish . . .

[Cheers and applause]

As a final note, I would like to describe briefly the human engineering study I mentioned earlier. That study is currently being designed and will be implemented with Mike Hingson and Jim Gashel. In the last few days I have had the pleasure of talking extensively about the program with Mike and think the program is coming along well. Jim Gashel and I are currently approaching

foundations for financial support to make this program possible. [Applause] The purpose of this program will be to enable blind people, through the National Federation of the Blind, to decisively influence the final development of the Kurzweil Reading Machine. [Applause] There are many questions to be answered, for example: what kind of controls should the machine have; what is the ideal configuration of the controls; how should the controls be marked; what kinds of special page formats are most important; should there be special auditory cues for punctuation and what should these cues be; and there are many other questions like these. It's my firm belief that the people who can best answer these questions and who can best guide the continuation of these research efforts, are the blind people themselves who would be using the machine. [Shouts of approval and applause] I can think of no organization better suited to provide this guidance and to answer these questions than the NFB. [Applause]

As an inventor, I can say that it is a real privilege and a pleasure to work with the organization of the people for whom this invention is intended, especially an organization with the dedication, not to mention the enthusiasm, of the Federation. [Applause] I was reading an interview with Edwin Land of Poloroid, inventor of instant photography, two days ago, and he mentioned that an inventor has two important jobs to do. The first is to make the thing work, and the second is to convince the people for whom the invention is intended that they really want the invention. Well, for my part, I've got the thing working but it is quite clear to me that no one is going to tell the National Federation of the Blind what blind people want. [Applause] Through this program, the National Federation of the Blind will tell us what blind people

want. I pledge to you that I will do everything in my power to see to it that the reading machine fulfills the needs and desires of blind people as expressed by their national organization, the National Federation of the Blind. [Cheers and applause] And that's why I've come here today. It should be our mutual goal that this program serve as a model of the kind of relationship that should exist, but rarely does, between professionals and the clients they serve. [Applause]

I would like to end on a personal note. I have been working with Jim Gashel on setting up this program for the last several months and I must say, and I mean this very sincerely, that Jim is one of the most dynamic and exciting persons that I've ever had the pleasure of working with. [Applause] And after meeting Dr. Jernigan this week, and hearing him speak last night and for the last few days, I can very well understand where Jim draws his inspiration. Thank you very much. [Applause]

RESOLUTIONS

ADOPTED BY
THE THIRTY-FIFTH ANNUAL CONVENTION
OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS, JULY, 1975

RESOLUTION 75-01

WHEREAS, one of the goals of the National Federation of the Blind has been the promulgation and support of legislation beneficial to the cause of the blind of the Nation; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, in Sections 503 and 504, provides at best partial coverage for blind persons seeking remunerative employment; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Government's Affirmative Action Program as embodied in Executive Order 11246, "prohibits federally assisted contractors and subcontractors from discriminating in employment because of race, color, religion, sex or national origin," and further, "requires employers to take Affirmative Action to provide equal employment opportunity"; and

WHEREAS, this exclusion of the blind and physically disabled from the Federal Government's Affirmative Action Program not only denies all blind and physically disabled Americans equal protection under the law, but also the same opportunities being offered to other minority groups; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this third day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization take all necessary action to persuade President Gerald Ford to amend Executive Order 11246 to henceforth include the blind and physically disabled within its provisions.

RESOLUTION 75-02

WHEREAS, the United States Department of State openly, unequivocally and unhesitatingly rejects *all* blind persons from consideration for overseas employment in the Foreign Service of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of State has established this blanket policy on the basis of its entrenched and unshakeable assumption that blind persons, when faced with a potential or actual threat, are automatically rendered helpless and defenseless, thereby placing the national interest of the United States in extreme jeopardy; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind believes, on the basis of the personal experiences of its over 50,000 members, that blind persons no less than their sighted counterparts can function abroad competently, safely, and productively, and are eminently adaptive to unstable political environments, unfamiliar cultures, and changing foreign life styles; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind believes that the principle of equal protection embodied in the Constitution of the United States is indivisible in its meaning, is not subject to negotiation, and applies no less to the blind than it does to other minority groups; and

WHEREAS, though requested to do so as a sign of its sincere and good faith interest in this issue, the Department of State has steadfastly and adamantly refused to send a representative to the 1975 Convention of the National Federation of the Blind, and *this* even after the National Federation of the Blind had assured the Department of State that its representative would only be expected to observe the Convention at work and make no official statement or presentation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization deplores and condemns the Department of State's discriminatory hiring practices toward the blind, and calls upon the Department of State to strike from its policy manuals and rule books all visual acuity standards and requirements whose effect is to bar blind persons from overseas employment on grounds of their blindness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization shall accept no pilot studies, trial periods, nor any other half-way measures which allegedly may lead to overseas employment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of this organization take all necessary steps and pursue all available courses of action (including passage of appropriate legislation by the Congress and/or litigation of a test case in the Federal Courts), in order to insure that this discriminatory policy is permanently and irrevocably eliminated, and that blind Americans be treated as first-class citizens not only within the United States but also in its embassies and consulates throughout the world.

RESOLUTION 75-03

Rejected by CONVENTION.

RESOLUTION 75-04

WHEREAS, the Sierra Club is a national organization having a long history of effort against forces in our society which would unthinkingly damage, even destroy, the natural environment by improper use of the earth's resources; and

WHEREAS, the membership cards distributed to every member of the Sierra Club bear the legend: "Not Blind opposition to Progress but opposition to Blind Progress," a legend which once again demonstrates to us the nature of our problems and the depth of society's stereotypes about us; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization urges the Sierra Club to remove this unfortunate legend from its membership cards and other literature where it may be used, to the end that we may be assisted in our efforts to achieve social and economic equality; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of the National Federation of the Blind take all necessary actions to achieve this end.

RESOLUTION 75-05

WHEREAS, the Social Security Act provides that blind persons who have a plan for self-support may have exempted additional income and resources necessary to carry out the plan; and

WHEREAS, under regulations published in the *Federal Register*, the Social Security Administration has ruled that a blind person with a plan for self-support may have exempted additional income and resources for a period up to eighteen months and an extension, if necessary, for an additional eighteen months, and an overall time limitation on this exemption not to exceed forty-eight months if the plan involves an educational objective; and

WHEREAS, this benighted and narrow ruling in regard to the self-support principle largely serves to defeat the object of the principle by denying to the blind a time sufficient to undertake graduate studies in preparation for professional occupations; and

WHEREAS, blind persons qualified for entry-level jobs find great difficulty in securing such employment because of the age-old and widespread barriers to employment resulting from misconceptions concerning the nature of blindness which equate blindness with incapacity; and

WHEREAS, the contemplated goal of saving the public purse represents an inhumane and costly retreat from the goal of turning tax-consumers into tax-payers; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of this interpretation is at cross purposes with the long-established and proven rehabilitation principle under which blind persons are encouraged to prepare to their individual maximum potentials for the occupations of their choice; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this third day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization requests the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to remove such arbitrary and harmful restrictions on the exemption of income and resources necessary for a plan for self-support.

RESOLUTION 75-06

WHEREAS, individuals owning real property used as a home, the market value of which exceeds \$25,000 are ineligible for Supplemental Security Income payments (except in the cases of Hawaii and Alaska where the value is set at \$35,000; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this third day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization shall seek to have the law amended so that the property used as a home by an applicant for, or recipient of, SSI, shall be exempted in determining eligibility for SSI.

RESOLUTION 75-07

WHEREAS, Section 1614(f)(i) of the Social Security Act provides that if a recipient of Supplemental Security Income is living with an ineligible spouse, the recipient's income and resources shall be deemed to include any income or resources of such spouse, whether or not available to such recipient, except to the extent determined by the Secretary to be inequitable under the circumstances; and

WHEREAS, in the interim regulation 416.1185, "Deeming of Income," it is provided that

the ineligible spouse can retain only up to \$65 per month for his or her own support, plus \$65 for job-related expenses and \$65 for the support of each minor child. All of the remainder of his or her income is allocated to the recipient; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind is at a loss to understand how the staff of the Social Security Administration can draft and implement such restrictive, even punitive, policies which are reminiscent of outmoded Elizabethan Poor Laws concepts; and

WHEREAS, such an inequitable provision will constitute a powerful incentive for the working spouse to cease being a self-supporting and productive member of the society; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this third day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization calls upon the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to revise the regulation so as to permit the ineligible spouse to retain at least \$400 net income per month, in addition to an allowance for job-related expenses and the support of minor children, before any allocation is made to the SSI recipient; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NFB seek a further amendment to the regulations to the end that the amount which the ineligible spouse can retain for his or her own support shall be increased in accordance with increases as shown by the Consumer Price Index.

RESOLUTION 75-08

WHEREAS, Congressman Bob Wilson of California has shown a keen interest in promoting civil rights legislation for the blind of this Country; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization commends Congressman Wilson for his wholehearted and farsighted efforts on behalf of the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President and Officers of this organization be directed to work closely with Congressman Wilson to secure the enactment of a White Cane Law.

RESOLUTION 75-09

Withdrawn by authors.

RESOLUTION 75-10

WHEREAS, the Federal Aviation Administration has published proposed rules regarding air travel for handicapped individuals; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the FAA's proposed rules to exclude the blind from any restrictions which may be imposed on persons defined as handicapped for purposes of air travel; and

WHEREAS, at the same time the FAA proposes to place certain restrictions on the seating of blind passengers, requiring that the blind may not be seated adjacent to emergency exits; and

WHEREAS, these proposed seating restrictions are based on the false assumption that the blind as a group are incapable of effecting an expeditious egress in an emergency; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the city of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization commends the FAA for accurately assessing the ability of blind persons to move expeditiously without assistance in an emergency situation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Federation officially condemns and deplors the FAA's attempt to restrict blind persons from sitting in exit row seats, this position being inconsistent with their more enlightened view; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization continues its offer to work with the Federal Aviation Administration to arrive at equitable policies and procedures which recognize the true competence of the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization stands ready to take all steps necessary to insure that the FAA will adopt a more reasonable and realistic position regarding air travel by the blind.

RESOLUTION 75-11

WHEREAS, hundreds of blind persons have taken an interest in amateur radio and have obtained the proper licenses from the Federal Communications Commission; and

WHEREAS, recently it has been alleged that amateur radio license examinations must be administered to the blind by FCC employees at the field offices only, in accordance with Section 1311E of the FCC rules and regulations; and

WHEREAS, in most parts of the United States the present FCC policy requires a blind applicant to travel great distances at much personal expense (including travel costs and time lost from work) in order to take the licensing test; and

WHEREAS, a previous FCC policy insured that such examinations could be administered at more convenient locations; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization calls upon the Federal Communications Commission to remove the present restrictions governing the location of amateur radio examinations for the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers of this Federation work with officials of the Federal Communications Commission to secure a more equitable opportunity for blind amateur radio license candidates.

RESOLUTION 75-12

WHEREAS, Congressman Bill Chappell of Florida has introduced HR 379 in the House of Representatives, 94th Congress; and

WHEREAS, HR 379 is a bill amending the Social Security Act to eliminate the five-month waiting period which is presently a prerequisite of eligibility for disability insurance benefits or the disability freeze; and

WHEREAS, the present five-month waiting period imposes a substantial financial hardship on blind persons who are otherwise entitled to receive benefits which they have earned; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of this Social Security disability insurance program is to insure against the economic loss which occurs as a result of a disability; and

WHEREAS, the true economic adversities usually begin at the onset of a disabling condition, not five months hence; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this third day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization make known its strong support for HR 379 through the presentation of testimony in Congressional hearings or through other appropriate means.

RESOLUTION 75-13

WHEREAS, the Congress has adopted Public Law 93-568 authorizing the President to convene a White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services; and

WHEREAS, this Federation has long championed the cause for improved library services for the blind in the United States; and

WHEREAS, if convened, this White House Conference must address itself to the library and information needs of the blind; and

WHEREAS, the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science is designated as the Federal agency having the responsibility for conducting the White House Conference; and

WHEREAS, prior to the Conference the various states will have opportunity to sponsor state conferences on libraries and information services; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization endorses and supports the calling of a White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization express to appropriate officials and agencies—including the President of the United States, the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, and Members of Congress—its support for the White House Conference and its desire to participate in the planning and execution of the conference in order for the organized blind to communicate its views concerning library services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all state affiliates of this organization actively participate in any state conferences which may be planned in the respective states; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the officers of this Federation take all steps necessary to ensure that the organized blind will be included in the Conferences on Libraries and Information Services at both the state and Federal levels.

RESOLUTION 75-14

WHEREAS, in the 94th Congress the Honorable James Burke of Massachusetts has introduced HR 281, a bill which would vastly improve the program of disability insurance authorized by title II of the Social Security Act; and

WHEREAS, the Honorable Vance Hartke of Indiana has introduced identical legislation in the United States Senate as S-1183—the Senate having passed this bill during six previous Congresses; and

WHEREAS, the final passage of this legislation has been recognized by the blind and others knowledgeable about blindness as being of the highest order of priority; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this third day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization expresses its official appreciation and deepest gratitude to Congressman James Burke and Senator Vance Hartke, both of whom have demonstrated that they understand the basic problems and needs of the blind today; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of this organization communicate our sincere appreciation to Congressman Burke and Senator Hartke for their continued support of effective programs to assist all blind persons.

RESOLUTION 75-15

WHEREAS, Title III of Public Law 93-516 authorizes the President of the United States to convene a White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals no later than December, 1976, “in order to develop recommendations and stimulate a national assessment of problems, and solutions to such problems, facing individuals with handicaps”; and

WHEREAS, provision under this act is made for Federal funding of similar conferences at the state level to be held prior to the White House Conference; and

WHEREAS, if the President does convene a White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals, such conference, together with the various state conferences, will serve to draw national attention to the problems of handicapped persons in America; and

WHEREAS, planning and programming to meet the needs of the blind will inevitably be addressed by such a conference if called by the President; and

WHEREAS, any assessment of current thought and any planning of future directions in work with the blind must be guided by the views and desires of those having the most direct experience with blindness—that is, the blind, themselves; and

WHEREAS, if these conferences are to benefit the blind, the particular services and programs needed by the blind must be identified, recognizing that the blind themselves, through their organization, are best able to articulate their needs and goals; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization hereby expresses to the President, Gerald R. Ford, the position that the blind long have been organized to speak for themselves, and through this organization they must be afforded their rightful opportunity to participate significantly in all phases of planning and conducting the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that each of the state affiliates of this organization insure that the voice of the organized blind is clearly heard in all state conferences which may be called prior to the White House Conference; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to President Gerald R. Ford and other appropriate officials responsible for planning and conducting the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals.

RESOLUTION 75-16

WHEREAS, there are proposals to establish a system of gasoline rationing as a means of reducing consumption of petroleum products in the United States; and

WHEREAS, such plans must not ignore the needs of blind persons, many of whom must purchase gasoline to operate automobiles in connection with business or shopping; and

WHEREAS, any plan which would restrict the purchase of gasoline to licensed automobile drivers would be inequitable and would adversely affect blind persons who now depend upon transportation by private auto as much as many individuals with sight; and

WHEREAS, public transportation is too often woefully inadequate for those individuals who must of necessity maintain a more flexible schedule; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization adopts the position that any plans which might be implemented for the rationing of gasoline must include provisions enabling blind persons to meet their needs for this important source of energy; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this position be made known to Federal energy officials and to appropriate committees of the Congress and that the President of this Federation take all steps necessary to insure that the needs of the blind for the purchase of gasoline and other petroleum products will not be overlooked in any rationing plans.

RESOLUTION 75-17

WHEREAS, Congressman Bill Chappell of Florida has introduced HR 5344 in the House of Representatives, 94th Congress; and

WHEREAS, HR 5344 is a bill to eliminate the requirement that an individual must have been entitled to disability benefits for at least twenty-four consecutive months in order to qualify for medicare on the basis of disability; and

WHEREAS, the present arrangement results in many disability insurance beneficiaries not having any financial assistance to meet the costs of medical care, costs which are steadily increasing and already are far beyond the means of those who must rely on Social Security benefits for their basic subsistence; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this third day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization make known its vigorous support for HR 5344 through the presentation of testimony in Congressional hearings and in other ways in order that disability insurance beneficiaries will be able to secure adequate medical assistance.

RESOLUTION 75-18

WHEREAS, even though hundreds of blind persons have amply demonstrated that the blind can compete with the sighted in all phases of the communications field, blind persons are still victims of massive job discrimination in this important area of potential employment; and

WHEREAS, despite the fact that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) saw fit, under threat of a Federal court order, to rescind its ruling which had barred the blind from competition for the first-class radio telephone license, certain bureaus and divisions of the Commission attempt to discourage employment of qualified blind individuals in the communications field; and

WHEREAS, one example of this is a recent attempt by the Aviation and Marine Division of FCC to prevent a Florida firm from pursuing a plan to employ approximately fifteen blind persons as ship-to-shore telephone operators; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization officially condemns and deplores the actions of the Federal Communications Commission which continue to frustrate the efforts of qualified blind persons who desire to be self-supporting by earning their living in the communications industry; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Federation calls upon the Federal Communications Commission to adopt a nonrestrictive and more positive approach which encourage the blind to enter all phases of the communications field; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be sent to all FCC Commissioners and to the appropriate oversight committees of the Congress and that the President of this organization take all other steps he deems necessary to achieve proper alteration of FCC policies and practices which presently discriminate against the blind.

RESOLUTION 75-19

WHEREAS, legislation has been introduced in the 94th Congress to prohibit states from reducing their supplementation of SSI benefits when federal cost-of-living increases (or other Federal increases) are made in such benefits; and

WHEREAS, if states elect not to pass along the Federal cost-of-living increases (or other increases) those in need will find themselves less able to purchase the basic necessities of life—food, shelter, clothing, et cetera; and

WHEREAS, the most current information indicates that fewer than half of the states which supplement the Federal payments to recipients will pass along the regular cost-of-living increase in July 1975, absorbing this increase into their own treasuries by paying reduced state supplementation; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization endorses and supports legislation to require states to pass along all increases in Federal SSI payments; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization take all steps necessary, including the presentation of testimony in Congressional hearings, to enact such legislation to meet the pressing economic needs of those who must depend on SSI and state supplemental payments.

RESOLUTION 75-20

WHEREAS, Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112) requires employers contracting with any department or agency of the United States to take

affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified handicapped individuals; and

WHEREAS, administrative responsibility for this program has been given to the Employment Standards Administration in the U. S. Department of Labor; and

WHEREAS, on June 17, 1975, Mr. Bernard E. DeLury, Assistant Secretary of Labor for Employment Standards, announced a reorganization plan which absorbs all affirmative action programs, including those for women, minorities, veterans, and the handicapped, under one umbrella: the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs; and

WHEREAS, this administrative arrangement was ostensibly chosen for the traditional reasons used to justify such umbrellas—greater efficiency, less red tape, no duplication of effort, and so on; and

WHEREAS, the experience of the blind with other umbrella programs at the Federal, state, and local levels is that the particular characteristics, requirements, and abilities of distinctive groups (such as the blind) are usually overlooked since in the rush to serve all of us, none of us are served well; and

WHEREAS, various officials in the U. S. Department of Labor, including Assistant Secretary DeLury, have sought through verbal assurances only to persuade the blind that unique characteristics will not be overlooked by top administrative and program officials operating under the umbrella plan; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization expresses its firm opposition to any organizational plan for affirmative action programs under Public Law 93-112 which would submerge the abilities, needs, and requirements of the blind in a giant melting pot, effectively negating the spirit of affirmative action in attempting to comply with the demands of substantially larger minority groups; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of this organization work with officials in the U. S. Department of Labor to achieve this end; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Federation shall remain vigilant to inform and alert Members of Congress and appropriate officials in the Executive Branch in the event that satisfactory prominence is not given to identifying and meeting the true needs of the blind for affirmative action employment.

RESOLUTION 75-21

WHEREAS, the National Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1974 mandates that

transit company operators receiving assistance under the act implement half fare plans during off-peak hours for handicapped and elderly persons; and

WHEREAS, interim Federal regulations developed pursuant to that act mandate that transit operators post signs in all buses and trains designating specific seats as priority seating for the elderly and handicapped; and

WHEREAS, the blind have amply demonstrated their ability to travel independently by all modes of public transportation; and

WHEREAS, the act and the proposed regulations implicitly assume that the blind are incapable of independent travel without special assistance or privileges and are therefore "transportation handicapped"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization officially goes on record as opposing special privileges and considerations based on blindness, such as priority seating and reduced fares; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization calls upon the Urban Mass Transportation Administration to exempt the blind from being arbitrarily and erroneously classified as "transportation handicapped."

RESOLUTION 75-22

WHEREAS, the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC) was undemocratically organized by the American Foundation for the Blind and, since its inception, has substantially hurt rather than helped blind Americans; and

WHEREAS, the Hadley School for the Blind is world-renowned for providing excellent quality correspondence courses to blind persons throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, the Hadley School for the Blind sought and received NAC accreditation, which accreditation has obviously done nothing to improve the quality of Hadley's services but, rather, has damaged the rapport and image which the school has developed through the years with the blind; and

WHEREAS, though it has often been alleged by NAC officials that only the members of the organized blind movement of this country—the National Federation of the Blind—were concerned with NAC's structure and inadequate and irrelevant standards, the follow-

ing recent events demonstrate that an increasing number of agencies and organizations have seen fit to disassociate themselves from NAC:

1. The Mississippi agency for the blind repudiated its NAC accreditation.
2. Mr. Robert Sibley, Executive Director of the Mississippi Industries for the Blind, recently indicated that he will not seek accreditation and wrote a strong letter to the managers of all workshops for the blind in the country urging them to refrain from any association with NAC.
3. Recently the Southern Conference of Librarians for the Blind and Physically Handicapped passed a resolution in which it was stated that libraries should meet American Library Association standards and should ignore NAC standards since they are totally irrelevant to current library service.
4. Although Recording for the Blind previously received NAC accreditation, that organization is now considering the repudiation of its accreditation and has agreed to refrain from using the NAC symbol on its letterhead during the period in which repudiation is being considered.
5. Although the California Department of Vocational Rehabilitation had previously stated that services to the blind in that state would have to be accredited by NAC by the summer of 1975, that order has now been withdrawn and that agency itself plans to develop relevant standards for the State of California.
6. The Board of Directors of the Maryland Workshop for the Blind unanimously voted Richard Hoover, developer of the long cane magnificent since the Board membership includes to withdraw from NAC. This is particularly st of the Maryland School for the Blind, and Dr. Dr. Francis Andrews, long-time superintendenethod for travel and himself a former NAC board member.
7. When NAC contacted Mr. Burt Risley, Director of the Texas Commission for the Blind and President of the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind, in order to secure Mr. Risley's rubber stamp of approval for proposed new standards for orientation and mobility instructors, Mr. Risley responded with a stinging letter in which he pointed out that NAC must cease to concern itself with the self-aggrandizement of professionals in the field and must concentrate on standards which aim at delivering services to blind persons.
8. When NAC's board absolutely refused to adopt meaningful and significant methods of consumer representation which had been recommended by four members of its own board, Dr. Andrew Adams, Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration of HEW, cut off all HEW funding to NAC, and
9. In May of this year the Bingham Foundation cut off its funding to NAC; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization directs

its officers and representatives to take all necessary steps to see to it that the Hadley School for the Blind revokes its accreditation from NAC, so that Hadley will be enabled to continue in its position of national prestige, rather than to be considered among those few oppressive agencies who have felt the need to hide their inadequacies behind the cloak of NAC accreditation.

RESOLUTION 75-23

WHEREAS, the white cane is symbolic of blind persons' aspirations toward lives of independence and productivity; and

WHEREAS, the fund raising campaigns conducted currently by Lions Clubs throughout the United States and the world often utilize references to the white cane in a manner which fosters confusion concerning both the direction of the fund raising endeavor and the use of the proceeds; and

WHEREAS, through the cooperation of the NFB of Idaho and the Idaho-Oregon Lions Sight Conservation Foundation, the Lions of that district are attempting to persuade Lions International to adopt an alternative to the white cane symbol to be used in Lions' fund raising activities on behalf of their sight conservation program; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this second day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization commends and congratulates the Idaho-Oregon Lions Sight Conservation Foundation for their cooperation with the organized blind, and for their effort to adopt a fund raising symbol more in keeping with the goal of sight conservation as well as less prejudicial to the general program of the National Federation of the Blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NFB urges Lions International to follow the lead of the Idaho-Oregon Lions Sight Conservation Foundation in using a new symbol in their fund raising efforts.

RESOLUTION 75-24

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind has always had the primary objective of establishing quality services for the blind both in the private and public sectors; and

WHEREAS, "professionals" in work for the blind increasingly are attempting to create for themselves a permanent, private preserve of services for the blind through the requiring of irrelevant special degrees and meaningless studies; and

WHEREAS, the takeover by “professionals” is manifesting itself under the pseudo-respectable cloak of “accreditation”; and

WHEREAS, in reality, “accreditation” in work for the blind is proving to be a self-serving process; and

WHEREAS, accreditation, in order to benefit the blind, must be relevant to the needs of the blind, rather than to the needs of agencies or the “professionals” who administer and staff them; and

WHEREAS, the National Federation of the Blind has drafted a set of standards for orientation-rehabilitation facilities that, if implemented, would meet the needs of the blind; and

WHEREAS, for many years the blind have said that we are not against accreditation *per se*, but only against irrelevant, nonresponsive, or self-serving standards; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization endorses the standards for orientation-rehabilitation facilities proposed by the NFB of California; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the National Federation of the Blind urge all members and all affiliates of the National Federation of the Blind to begin to develop standards in all areas of work for the blind in order that the blind may have appropriate standards to promote, rather than simply to oppose irrelevant and negative standards.

RESOLUTION 75-25

WHEREAS, despite the fact that the blind have demonstrated their ability to compete successfully in private industry, many rehabilitation agencies continue to offer sheltered shop employment as the only or primary option available to the blind; and

WHEREAS, this deplorable practice prevents blind persons from realizing their full potential in the labor force, resulting in terminal employment in sheltered workshops; and

WHEREAS, the blind who are victims of this sorry system should at least be afforded the dignity of receiving a living wage earned through their labors; and

WHEREAS, through the efforts of the organized blind some workshops have now adopted the principle that blind workers shall be paid at least the Federal Minimum Wage; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Labor is presently conducting an in-depth review of the sheltered workshop operations; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization calls upon the United States Department of Labor to develop regulations which eliminate the special certificates of exemption, thereby guaranteeing that blind workers in sheltered employment will be paid at least the Federal Minimum Wage—that which is paid to workers in private industry.

RESOLUTION 75-26

WHEREAS, sighted applicants for civil service positions are only required to pass civil service examinations; and

WHEREAS, blind applicants must meet additional unreasonable requirements such as special tests and superfluous evaluations; and

WHEREAS, such discriminatory segregation of the blind applicant is reprehensible, unjust, and serves no useful purpose; and

WHEREAS, a number of public agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service and the Social Security Administration have often been known to require such special testing; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization condemns and deplores the detrimental and discriminatory requirements of special testing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call on all public and governmental agencies, including the Internal Revenue Service and the Social Security Administration, to abandon these arbitrary and demeaning practices.

RESOLUTION 75-27

WHEREAS, the Supplemental Security Income Program was established on January 1, 1974, and placed under the auspices of the Social Security Administration; and

WHEREAS, the total job assignment of the Service and Claims Representatives is so

complex that they cannot hope to become expert in both the Supplemental Security Income and the Social Security Regulations of the Social Security Administration; and

WHEREAS, when dealing with the complexities inherent in blindness, staff members should not only demonstrate their knowledge of the law, but also their understanding of the proper philosophy and needs of the blind; and

WHEREAS, up to this time, the personnel involved in the disbursement of Supplemental Security Income payments have demonstrated their incapacity to appreciate the problems inherent in blindness; and

WHEREAS, when programs for the blind are placed under specialists in tune with the needs of the blind, such programs provide more adequate service to the blind; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this Federation urges that the Social Security Administration be required to establish in each of its regional and district offices a unit which shall deal exclusively with the blind, to make available to blind applicants and recipients of Supplemental Security Income information about other existing as well as other relevant services; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Federation urge the Social Security Administration to set up seminars for its personnel which deal solely with the specialized needs of the blind.

RESOLUTION 75-28

WHEREAS, the Library of Congress is now using cassette recording as another means of producing books for the blind; and

WHEREAS, the Library of Congress has stated that by the year 1980 the talking book disc program will be phased out completely in favor of the cassette; and

WHEREAS, experience has shown that there are still numerous problems surrounding the cassette program; and

WHEREAS, many blind persons have encountered problems with defective tapes which make it impossible to complete the reading of a book; and

WHEREAS, many readers have complained of the poor quality of the cassette recordings as compared to the talking book disc production; and

WHEREAS, the talking book disc program has been a revolutionary aid for the blind and physically handicapped; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this Federation take all steps necessary to see that the talking book disc program is retained; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Federation urge that the Library of Congress this recording medium, and that such survey bin order to evaluate the true effectiveness of make a survey of all cassette program users e available to the Library of Congress before a final decision is made to discard the talking book disc.

RESOLUTION 75-29

Defeated by CONVENTION.

RESOLUTION 75-30

WHEREAS, state vending stand licensing agency policies and practices vary widely throughout the Country with respect to set asides under the Randolph-Sheppard Act; and

WHEREAS, traditionally the National Federation of the Blind has opposed set asides which deprive blind merchants of their earnings, replacing their earned income with services which are often unneeded and unwanted; and

WHEREAS, such set asides are frequently expended to provide equipment and services to individuals other than the blind operator paying the tax or fee; and

WHEREAS, since operators, like all citizens, have already paid taxes in support of the rehabilitation program, the set aside fee, or tax, constitutes a double taxation of our blind citizens, in contravention of the equal protection provisions of the Constitution of the United States; and

WHEREAS, thirteen states presently operate successful small business enterprise programs without the use of set asides; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this third day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization reaffirms its opposition to set asides which impose an unwarranted, undemocratic, and improper burden upon blind merchants; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization shall promote appropriate legislation which will limit set asides with a view toward their eventual elimination; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that state affiliates and local chapters of the National Federation of the Blind work with state vending stand licensing agencies to develop viable plans for financing small business enterprise programs without set asides.

RESOLUTION 75-31

WHEREAS, at the request of the United States Civil Service Commission, the NFB National Association of Blind Secretaries and Transcribers prepared a pamphlet setting guidelines to assist employers in the hiring of blind secretaries and transcribers; and

WHEREAS, the Civil Service Commission sent the pamphlet to the President's Committee on the Employment of the Handicapped for review; and

WHEREAS, the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped revised the pamphlet so that both the employer and the prospective blind employee are shown as childish and condescending; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled in the City of Chicago, Illinois, on this fourth day of July, 1975, that this organization instructs its officers to arrange a meeting with the NABSTers, the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, and the U. S. Civil Service Commission to the end that a pamphlet be produced which will encourage employers to hire the blind as secretaries and transcribers.

RESOLUTION 75-32

WHEREAS, blind Americans face discrimination in economic and social opportunities; and

WHEREAS, such discrimination is most often caused by the misinformation and lack of understanding about blindness which exists; and

WHEREAS, public information media and the entertainment field (and in particular, the television and motion pictures industries), through the stereotyped portrayal of the blind, reinforce the already prevalent negative public attitude about blindness; and

WHEREAS, such negative reinforcement does considerable damage to the efforts of the

blind to peaceably achieve first-class citizenship and thereby adds to the problems of blind Americans; and

WHEREAS, the television and motion picture industries and all other appropriate media offer a vast potential to assist the blind in educating the public; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that we condemn and deplore the past image of blindness presented by the public information media as well as television and motion picture industries, and request the President of the National Federation of the Blind to express to the proper authorities in the appropriate industries the urgent need for complete review of past treatment of blindness; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that both the television and motion picture industries be requested to rely upon the leadership of the National Federation of the Blind to serve as consultants in developing a portrayal of blindness consistent with the progressive image of blindness currently recognized by enlightened people.

RESOLUTION 75-33

WHEREAS, blind Americans face discrimination in economic and social opportunities; and

WHEREAS, such discrimination most often results from the misinformation and lack of understanding which exists about blindness; and

WHEREAS, a necessary element and the struggle for first-class citizenship is public information and the presentation of an enlightened image of blindness; and

WHEREAS, this can most effectively be accomplished through public service messages distributed by the media; and

WHEREAS, the American Broadcasting Company and the Columbia Broadcasting System radio and television networks have greatly contributed to our efforts to eliminate economic and social discrimination through the airing of our public service announcements; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that we express our appreciation to the appropriate authorities at the American Broadcasting Company and the Columbia Broadcasting System for their invaluable contribution to the efforts of the blind to achieve equality and economic and social opportunity.

RESOLUTION 75-34

Tabled by COMMITTEE.

RESOLUTION 75-35

Tabled by RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE.

RESOLUTION 75-36

WHEREAS, insurance companies traditionally use statistics and actuarial tables when establishing policies and rates of payment; and

WHEREAS, a recent insurance department survey revealed that insurance companies do not use actuarial statistics when determining policies and establishing rates for sales to blind persons, but rather rely upon the myths and misconceptions about blindness in determining policies; and

WHEREAS, we have found that companies use such discriminatory practices as: 1) refusing to insure blind children; 2) refusing to insure newly blinded persons for varying periods of time; 3) requiring blind persons to be certified as well adjusted, rehabilitated and emotionally stable; 4) refusing waiver of premium and double indemnity benefits; 5) charging excessive rates for basic insurance coverage; 6) requiring blind persons to endure longer waiting periods for coverage; and 7) denying health insurance benefits to blind persons; and

WHEREAS, to practice any of the above without supporting actuarial statistics constitutes outright discrimination; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization condemns and deplores these discriminatory practices and instructs the President and officers of this organization to contact national organizations of insurance companies and take all steps necessary to eliminate discrimination against the blind in insurance.

RESOLUTION 75-37

Held for consideration at the 1976 CONVENTION.

RESOLUTION 75-38

WHEREAS, The American Foundation for the Blind, in cooperation with orientation and mobility personnel, sponsored a working conference in February, 1975, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, with the objective of "collecting and field testing information about the skills, techniques, and devices used in training blind persons to travel in inclement weather"; and

WHEREAS, the Foundation intends to use the "body of information collected to publish a manual or text which could be used in orientation and mobility training throughout the snow areas of the continent"; and

WHEREAS, the conferees asserted that blind persons are incapable of truly independent travel by suggesting that they require an inordinant degree of sighted assistance and a wide variety of specially designed mobility devices; and

WHEREAS, some of the conference participants expressed an interest in making such conferences an annual affair; and

WHEREAS, if the Foundation were to consult with those blind persons already traveling independently in the snow areas of the country, it would discover that such conferences and the resulting manuals are unnecessary if not detrimental to the interests of the blind; and

WHEREAS, the unfolding pattern of events manifesting itself here is disturbingly similar to that which led to the publication of *A Step by Step Guide to Personal Management for Blind Persons*, a document which insults and degrades all blind persons; and

WHEREAS, this kind of conference is illustrative of a more general and significant problem: namely, the failure of agencies serving the blind to consult with representatives of the organized blind movement; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization deplores and condemns the American Foundation for the Blind for its failure to consult with the National Federation of the Blind before undertaking research on winter travel techniques for the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the AFB be urged and encouraged to seek the advice and approval of the organized blind movement prior to embarking upon any program of systematic research or service in matters affecting the blind; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization instructs its President and officers to make every effort to take all steps necessary to insure that the AFB develops a formalized mechanism of consultation and approval with the leaders of the organized blind movement to examine and review all projects of research affecting the lives of blind persons.

RESOLUTION 75-39

WHEREAS, the blind have demonstrated their ability to travel independently with competence on all modes of public transportation and conveyance; and

WHEREAS, air carriers frequently fail to recognize the right of the blind to equal access on the standard terms and conditions established for the general public; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Aviation Administration has compounded the problem of the blind and confused the issues by proposing inconsistent, discriminatory, and restrictive regulations governing the travel of blind passengers; and

WHEREAS, Air New England Airlines, Inc., has developed and implemented an illegal and discriminatory policy which illustrates the present confusion with respect to the status of blind air travelers forcing them to sign a waiver releasing the airlines from its normal and legal responsibilities, and stating in part: "I agree to follow all orders and to permit such physical assistance as the Air New England Airlines station and flight personnel deem necessary for my safety. . . . I hereby represent that I can fly as a passenger aboard a jet or propeller aircraft without physical or medical risk to others or to myself . . . in particular, my condition does not involve any unusual likelihood of lapse of consciousness or tendency to become nauseated. . . . I understand and agree that, in case of a change of circumstances or subsequently acquired information or if it should at any time become necessary to ensure safety or for the comfort of other passengers, Air New England Airlines may refuse me passage or remove me at any point . . ."; and

WHEREAS, we find this illegal policy to be an outrageous violation of our constitutional and moral rights; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this fourth day of July, 1975, in the City of Chicago, Illinois, that this organization declares its intention to rectify the injustice being done to blind air travelers stemming from the arbitrary regulations which are administered at the whim of airline personnel; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the President of this Federation shall take all steps necessary to remedy this situation, including the filing of a formal complaint with the Federal Aviation Administration and, if necessary, legal action against Air New England Airlines and corrective Federal legislation.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
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